

Hafa Adai!

Bad weather stopped cruise ship from docking. **PAGE 2**

Police nabs wanted man. **PAGE 8**

75¢

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THE CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Hopwood fire possible arson



By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

A fire that engulfed multiple classrooms at the old Hopwood Middle School campus yesterday is believed to have been started deliberately, but the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services is still investigating the case to confirm that.

According to Hopwood principal Dr. Rizalina Liwag, she learned after speaking with DFEMS investigators that they believe that the fire that they extinguished at Hopwood's Building B could have been intentionally set.

"So [DFEMS] believes that this is not just an ordinary fire and was probably triggered naturally. They believe that this was some kind of arson and that somebody is responsible for doing this," she said.

See **HOPWOOD** on **Page 4**

Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services units surround Building B of the old Hopwood Middle School campus.
KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

Private sector also sees work-hour cuts

» **'We have to cut the hours of CW-1 workers before US employees'**

By **BEA CABRERA**
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CORRESPONDENT

In the wake of the CNMI government's announcement last week that it is cutting the bi-weekly work hours of its employees from 80 to 64 hours,

some private companies are following suit, cutting work hours and encouraging their employees to use their leaves.

According to Hotel Association of the Northern Marianas Islands chair Gloria Cava-

See **PRIVATE** on **Page 4**

CPA denies suspension of Asiana flights

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Ports Authority denied yesterday that Asiana Airlines would be suspending half their flights in the wake of the out-

break of novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV.

In a short phone interview with CPA executive director Christopher S. Tenorio, he said that he hasn't heard of Asiana Airlines or any other airlines planning to suspend

flights as a result of the novel coronavirus.

Tenorio added that it could all just be a rumor.

"No, we haven't heard from them. We haven't heard anything from Asiana. They

See **CPA** on **Page 4**

'Govt will impose cuts on employees but silent on \$40M owed by IPI'

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The CNMI government is willing to impose a 16-hour cut for government employees, yet remains silent about the whereabouts of the \$40 million that Imperial Pacific International (CNMI) LLC owes the CNMI people.

That was one of the issues that Sen. Paul A.

Manglona (Ind-Rota) raised yesterday during a Senate session, where he described the 16-hour cut for government employees as "harrowing, agonizing, and a disturbing déjà vu encounter."

This developed as House of Representatives members held a closed-door meeting with Finance Secretary



Manglona

David DLG Atalig yesterday afternoon in the House chamber. When *Saipan Tribune* left the Legislature at 4pm, the meeting was still going on.

At the Senate session, Manglona outlined his many concerns and questions about Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' Directive 2020-002 announcing the implementation of the

64-hour work schedule beginning March 15. In particular, he said the Torres-Palacios administration is imposing the 64-hour work schedule, but there is not a whisper from Torres or Finance Secretary Atalig as to where the \$40 million in Community Benefit Fund for fiscal years 2018 and 2019 are.

Manglona pointed out that, although the

See **GOVT** on **Page 4**

INSIDE



NATION

The Solar Orbiter rockets into space to capture the first pictures of the sun's elusive poles.

PAGE 14



ASIA

Mainland China has reported another rise in cases of the new virus and more deaths.

PAGE 15



LIFE & STYLE

"Parasite" became the first non-English film to win best picture at the Oscar awards.

PAGE 19



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Local

Bad weather prevented cruise ship from docking

By JUSTINE NAUTA
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REPORTER

A cruise ship called *Crystal Symphony* had intended to dock on Saipan last Feb. 3 but wasn't able to do so, not because of any passenger who may have been suspected of being infected with the novel coronavirus but because of bad weather conditions, according to Pacific Development Inc. managing director Gordon I. Marciano.

At the time when *Crystal Symphony* was making plans to dock on Saipan, rough seas and low visibility prevented it from doing so, prompting the cancellation of many tours that had been lined up for the ship's passengers.

"The water was just rough, and the wind was so strong that the [*Crystal Symphony*] weren't able to come into our channel" Mariano said.

This would have been the ships' inaugural port call on Saipan, he added. Tours and shuttles were also provided but were cancelled until further notice.

Guam recently denied a cruise vessel from docking

in the U.S. territory because of fears that some of its passengers may be infected with the 2019 novel coronavirus.

The vessel, *MS Westerdam*, a British-American private cruise vessel with 1,455 guests and 802 crew members, docked in Hong Kong on Feb. 1, 2020, and boarded approximately 800 passengers. The vessel sought entry at two other ports but was denied given the potential risk of infection and the need for a large quarantine.

"While we feel for every soul on board the *MS Westerdam*, our obligation is to protect the people of Guam. Though Guam is prepared to deal with the potential implications of the coronavirus, few jurisdictions can screen, quarantine, or treat 1,400 patients at one time," said Guam Gov. Lou Leon Guerrero.

There are still no confirmed cases of the virus in Guam and on Saipan.

The Mariana Islands aren't the only ones who have experienced this. Japan recently refused to let a luxury cruise ship dock due to sus-

pected cases of the novel coronavirus contaminating the noncitizen passengers.

The operator of a cruise ship quarantined in Yokohama, near Tokyo, said an additional 66 cases were found aboard. That is in addition to 70 reported earlier.

Health Minister Katsunobu Kato said the Japanese government was considering testing all 3,711 passengers and crew on the *Diamond Princess*, which would require them to remain aboard until results are available. Health authorities are scrambling to deliver medicine requested by more than 600 passengers.

"We are doing the utmost to keep everyone in good health," Kato said.

The death toll from the virus now stands at 908, has passed the 774 people believed to have died in the 2002-03 epidemic of severe acute respiratory syndrome, another viral outbreak that originated in China. The total of 40,171 cases on the mainland of the new virus vastly exceeds the 8,098 sickened by SARS. **(With AP)**



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By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

The CNMI is the only mem-

CHCC shoots down virus rumors

By **JUSTINE NAUTA**
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REPORTER

The Commonwealth Health Care Corp. submitted last Feb. 10 a specimen for the novel coronavirus, 2019-nCoV, for testing to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention laboratory in Atlanta, Georgia.

However, this does not mean that the CNMI has a confirmed case, according to a CHCC statement, adding that the CNMI remains safe and coronavirus-free and that CHCC will provide further updates on this case when it is available.

CHCC emphasized in the statement that, although this patient does not meet the full coronavirus case definition, they are taking precautionary orders in order to protect the CNMI.

This case is not related to a post that was circulating on social media yesterday of an alleged case of a man with coronavirus who reportedly escaped from a quarantine area from Wuhan, China, and made his way to the CNMI.

CHCC is still investigating the source of this false infor-

ber of the Oceania Customs Organization that offers a grace period for an importer to pay their excise tax, accord-

mation and will be able to provide updates when it becomes available.

According to a separate statement, CHCC said doesn't take these rumors lightly and that any awareness of suspected or confirmed cases of the virus is of the utmost importance to them and will continue to provide timely and clear information. "At this time, it is most important to not believe [allegations] or rumors on social media unless there is an official statement from CHCC," it added. "Until then, CHCC would like to remind the public that the best way to protect yourself and others from the virus and other illnesses is to practice good basic health and hygiene such as washing your hands for at least 20 seconds or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer, avoiding touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands, avoiding close contact with people who are sick, staying home when you are sick, covering your cough/sneeze with a tissue and properly disposing of it, and cleaning and disinfecting touched objects and surfaces frequently."

Igisomar named Senate rep on SWDB

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Senate President Victor B. Hocog appointed last week Sen. Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan) to serve as the Senate member on the State Workforce Development Board, which addresses matters affecting the CNMI's workforce.

Hocog made the appointment at the request of Gov. Ralph DLG. Torres last December to select a Senate representative to serve a two-year term on the board.

The appointment is technically a renewal for Igisomar as he has been a member of the SWDB as Senate representative since he became a senator in 2015. Prior to become a senator, Igisomar was already participating in the SWDB as Commerce secretary.

For his part, House Speaker Blas Jonathan T. Attao (R-Saipan) appointed Rep. Ralph N. Yumul (R-Saipan) to the board as the House representative.

In a later interview, Igisomar said it is a must for them as legislators to participate in a group that is basically run by the private sector to look

into the labor needs of the private industry.

"It's a collaboration or network," Igisomar said. "My role [in representing the] Senate, along with the House, is to look for ways to support this board, how we can make sure that their efforts, their projects, and their directives are taken care of."

The senator said the Legislature is one of those that should be a part of this board so that if there is any discussion, projects, development within the board, they try to make it as seamless as possible.

Pursuant to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the governor shall establish a SWDB to, among other functions, develop a statewide workforce development plan with the primary objective of supporting a comprehensive and streamlined workforce development system in the CNMI.

SWDB membership includes stakeholders from both the private and public sectors, with the specific inclusion of a member of each chamber of the local legislature, appointed by the respective presiding officer.

'Eliminate grace period for importer to pay excise tax'

ing to CNMI Customs director Jose C. Mafnas, who supports the idea of eliminating this.

At the House's session Friday, Mafnas urged House members to pass House Bill 21-104 that would eliminate the 30-day grace period within which to pay the excise tax on good that require Customs inspection and clearance.

Mafnas said he strongly believes that the legislation is a win-win proposition for all—the CNMI government and Customs as the protector of the CNMI borders, importers, and the entire community.

House floor leader Rep. John Paul P. Sablan (R-Saipan) pre-filed House Bill 21-104.

Mafnas said that Finance Secretary David DLG Atalig has asked him to convey his endorsement of the bill.

The Customs director said he has been advocating for an amendment of the taxing provision, particularly the excise tax part. He said the CNMI is the only member of the Oceania Customs Organization that offers a grace period for import tax, as all OCO members impose a "pay upon clearance" requirement.

Mafnas said the "pay upon clearance" will lessen arrears and Customs will stop sending out billings or going after delinquent taxpayers to resolve their account.

"It takes a lot of efforts to collect outstanding payments on our assigned officers," said the director, adding that the legislation will cure this issue.

Mafnas said the "pay upon clearance" will also increase revenue for the CNMI government as all dutiable imported goods will be paid immediately. "There is no option for an importer to ignore their

payment obligation," he said.

Mafnas added that the "pay upon clearance" will allow Customs officers to focus on protecting CNMI borders from the infiltration of harmful goods.

He said Customs continues to face a lot of challenges with drug smuggling, undervaluation of goods, undeclared of high tax-rate commodities, and other contrabands like fake products and banned hazardous chemicals.

"House Bill 21-104 will lessen these challenges," Mafnas said.



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IT&E

Guma Hustisia now open

By **KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA**
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REPORTER

The Guma Hustisia, which has been closed for nearly two years due to problems with its ventilation and air-conditioning, finally opened its doors

yesterday starting with the Supreme Court wing.

According to a CNMI Judiciary statement, the Supreme Court wing of Guma Hustisia will be open during regular hours starting yesterday, in addition to alternate courtroom sites

like the Marianas Business Plaza and the U.S. District Court.

The Supreme Court wing is now available for both trial and appellate court sessions.

According to Superior Court director Sonia Camacho, it was a warm

welcome back yesterday afternoon, with Superior Court Associate Judge Joseph Camacho conducting a few of his cases in the Supreme Court wing.

"I just want to thank the members of the public, the members of the CNMI bar, our partners who have assisted us with providing alternate sites, the Department of Public Safety, the U.S. District Court for the NMI, and of course, our staff. They have worked diligently to get us to where we're at and to make sure cases are heard timely, and parties have access to the courts. We are spread thin between four court sites, but this is an added courtroom and it's just a warm welcome for us to be back into the building," she said.

As for the Superior Court courtrooms, chambers, and the divisions and offices on the first floor, they will

remain closed until further notice. However, full occupancy of the Guma Hustisia is expected by the end of 2020.

The repairs made to the Guma Hustisia that allowed for its reopening include carpet removal, mold remediation, procurement and installation of temporary air conditioning systems, and the atrium skylight replacement with concrete caps.

The CNMI Judiciary continues to coordinate efforts with the Secretary of Finance and the Capital Improvement Projects office for the completion of project scopes.

Additionally, recovery and repair projects for damage from Super Typhoon Yutu to other interior and exterior areas of the Guma Hustisia are ongoing and continue to be coordinated the Public Assistance Office of the Office of the Governor.

Santos seeks reprieve on loan payments

By **FERDIE DE LA TORRE**
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REPORTER

Citing the financial crisis and the administration's austerity measures, Sen. Teresita A. Santos (Ind-Rota) has asked the Northern Marianas Housing Corp., the Marianas Public Land Trust, the Commonwealth Development Authority, and six banks to make a "humanitarian gesture" to CNMI loan customers by offering a 90-day loan payment deferment program or an income-based repayment.

Santos asked the nine institutions to temporarily defer or lower monthly payments for loan customers.

The senator made the request in separate letters last week and yesterday to NMHC corporate director Jesse Palacios, MPLT administrator

Barbara Reyes, Commonwealth Development Authority executive director Manuel A. Sablan, City Trust Bank manager Maria L. Johnson, Bank of Saipan president/chief executive officer John Arroyo, Bank of Guam vice president/CNMI regional manager Marcie Tomokane, Bank of Hawaii branch manager Joe Fujihira, Bank Pacific office manager Marvin Deleon Guerrero, and First Hawaiian Bank branch manager Vickie Izuka.

Santos said Gov. Ralph DLG Torres' recent declaration of a state of significant emergency, coupled with the loss of the CNMI's tourism market and the uncertainty of how soon the tourism industry will bounce back, has left many people in the midst of a financial crisis. Santos said this will leave many people unable to make

their monthly loan payments. She noted that many are even still recovering from the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu's destructions in October 2018.

Santos said the Torres-Palacios administration's announcement last Friday about implementing austerity measures that will cut government employees' biweekly 80 hours down to 64 hours will further exacerbate the financial capability of most families to purchase basic necessities as well as pay loans, mortgages, and other debts that they may owe.

Santos added that the cost of living on Rota is exorbitant already and will add burden on families that have long struggled to make ends meet.

"The impending financial crisis will have an unavoidable ripple effect that will trickle down to the private sectors and their employees as well," the senator said in her letter.

HOPWOOD

From Page 1

After hearing that from DFEMS investigators, Liwag now plans to prioritize security for the campus, especially since repairs are underway soon.

"This was something that we need to really prioritize. We're in the process of completing and turning in our purchase order to start the repair of the campus," she said.

Liwag added that she, as principal, is saddened that someone would even consider committing such a crime.

"It's just so sad. We already have so many challenges and struggles with our temporary campus and then now I have to also oversee the old campus to make sure that it is safe and intact. We feel that we really need to take action sooner rather than later to ensure that the buildings are safe and this will not happen again," she said.

Liwag said that she was called to the damaged Hopwood campus at about 4:15pm because of a report of a fire.

"I received a call that there were police officers and fire department over at the campus, stating that the

campus was on fire, particularly our Building B. The call police received was from a concerned citizen," she said.

Liwag explained that DFEMS first informed her that there was a bush fire behind Hopwood's stage but further investigation led firefighters to the fire within Building B.

"There was a bush fire first behind the stage area. And then when fire department came, they found out that it was not just a bush fire behind the stage but there was also a fire inside the building," she said.

DFEMS has yet to release an official statement on the incident.

PRIVATE

From Page 1

nagh, some hotels have been cutting operations and the first ones that suffer from this fallout are the foreign workers, more commonly referred to as CW-1 workers.

"We have to cut the [hours of] CW-1 workers before we cut the [hours of] U.S. employees but we are cutting hours as much as allowable by law and by the regulations the U.S. Department of Labor issued last year," she said.

"We are trying our best to just hold on but when you are looking at occupancies that are in the 20%, something needs to be done. We need to have some sort of temporary waiver that would allow us to survive," she added.

The coronavirus outbreak in late January has already resulted in the cancellation of flights from China and Hong Kong and, with the Marianas Visitors Authority projecting zero tourist arrivals from China until the end of the fiscal year, the CNMI economy expects to absorb an estimated loss of over \$40 million by October.

One challenge that CNMI employ-

ers have to face is that U.S. Department of Labor regulations only deal with termination and not cutting work hours. "We cannot terminate everyone for a problem that we believe is going to be temporary, such as the coronavirus outbreak. Let us say, three months down the line and you are at a hotel that has 50% CW-1 workers, then you go up 80% to 100% operations, it is not possible to operate with only 50% of your staff," Cavanagh said.

"So there is a need for some leeway to allow us to cut the hours, to allow them to take leave without pay voluntarily. ...That's kind of like what we are doing now. If you have a leave then you are off because you have to take all of your leave [credits] because there is nothing to do in the hotel," Cavanagh added.

She said the decrease in the number of tourists and hotel cancellations were immediately felt. "By Jan. 26, we already felt the huge cancellations and sometimes there were, at most, 400 cancellations at one given time. The hotels that rely heavily on the Chinese market are the ones that are going to be affected the most," she said.

She pointed out that there's not much incentive for people to travel

right now, considering the suspension of direct flights from China to the CNMI and the proclamation of President Donald Trump suspending the entry of immigrants and non-immigrants to the United States and territories who pose a risk of transmitting novel coronavirus.

"Sichuan Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, Beijing Capital Airlines, and Hong Kong Express cannot run loads if there are no passengers because they will just lose money," she said, adding that majority of the customers of these airlines are not travelling.

Despite of everything, Cavanagh stays positive, citing the CNMI's experience when the SARS outbreak happened in 2002-2003. "SARS [severe acute respiratory syndrome] lasted for about six months. ...The key is always going to be on the Centers for Disease Control if they going to come up with a vaccine," she said. "Once they come up with a vaccine, then I think people are going to be inclined to travel and we are hoping that, when that happens, we are going to get people who [have a pent-up demand for] travel. At that point, we should be ready with precautionary measures at the airport," she added.

CPA

From Page 1

will still be coming in on their regular flight schedule," he said.

Finance Secretary David Atalig earlier blamed the revision of the annual revenue estimates for fiscal year 2020 from an initial projected decrease in gross revenues of \$39.20 million to \$48.38 million on the cancellation of flights from China and Korea.

According to Tenorio, the only airlines that have so far suspended or cancelled their flights in February are Sichuan Airlines, China Eastern Airlines, Beijing Capital Airlines, and Hong Kong Express Airlines—all due to the coronavirus outbreak.



Tenorio

rus outbreak.

Travelers from mainland China arrive in the CNMI through carriers such as Hong Kong Express, China Eastern Airlines, Sichuan Airlines, and Beijing Capital Airlines.

Sichuan Airlines suspended all flights to the CNMI from last Jan. 31 until further notice.

Last Jan. 30, Sichuan Airlines provided "ferry-in" and "live-out" service. It means that the airline arrived in the CNMI with no passengers and left with travelers.

China Eastern also cancelled all flights from last Jan. 31 until further notice due to the virus.

Beijing Capital Airlines cancelled all flights until the end of February.

GOVT

From Page 1

Community Benefit Fund monies are not deposited into the general fund, such monies should be considered public funds as they are part of the consideration for the exclusive casino license to IPI.

He said the funds were pledged in exchange for the casino license. Therefore, the Community Benefit Fund is tantamount to earmarked funds of the CNMI, he added.

"There is no question about this, and there is also no question that if there is a better time to make good use of these monies, it is at this very moment when we are about to ask our people to take a cut of 20% from their paycheck," Manglona said.

Pursuant to the casino license agreement, IPI should have made available to the Community Benefit Fund a total of \$40 million as of Oct. 1, 2019, Manglona said, not including the fiscal year 2020 contribution of another \$20 million this Oct. 1.

"To date, there is no official report on disbursement or expenditure, if any, of the Community Benefit Fund monies," said Manglona, adding that the press reported that only approximately \$3 million had been paid by IPI, leaving an unpaid balance of \$37 million. These funds, he said, must be accounted for and any distribution must be disclosed.

On the announcement of austerity measures, Manglona said that

Atalig, in a letter to Torres last Feb. 3, based his belt-tightening policies and budgetary projections on a 72-hour bi-weekly work schedule. Then, he said, a mere four days later, Torres issued the 64-hour schedule directive. The senator said the government should stop making drastic decisions without having factual and reliable financial information in its possession.

Manglona said everyone can blame the 2018 Super Typhoon Yutu, but that even a year before it hit, the government already had a \$25 million deficit in fiscal year 2018.

"We can also now blame the coronavirus, but even before this, we already knew we had about \$90 million in fiscal year 2019 deficit spending," he said.

Yet, the senator said, the Legislature was misled into thinking that the CNMI was on its way back to fiscal normalcy. In fact, Manglona said, Torres rescinded the 72-hour work schedule just two months ago when he should have already known that first quarter revenue projection was short by more than \$4 million.

Obviously, he said, Torres was working with inaccurate financial figures, which led to the premature lifting of the austerity measure.

Manglona said Finance should answer the question whether the casino Business Gross Revenue Tax funds are being intermingled with CNMI general fund revenues, and are being used as part of its cash flow management.



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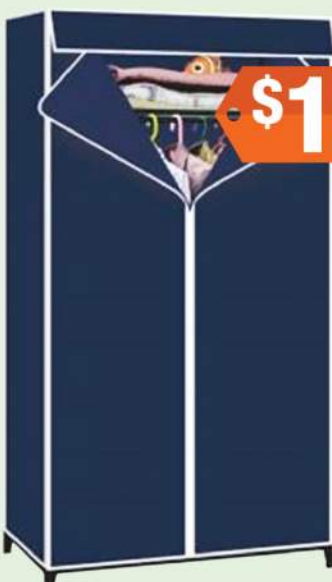
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One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-20-010, Supply & Delivery of Power Distribution Annual Materials, Saipan, CNMI" to CUC Procurement & Supply Division, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Dandan, Saipan MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 a.m. (ChST) on March 6, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time. Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered. *An electronic copy of the entire submission is also required to be sent via email to CUC Procurement & Supply Division via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.*

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. The Bid bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract. Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations. All responses to this Invitation for Bids should take into account any and all taxes, including excise tax, which will become the obligation of the bidder, awarded a contract.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. The award of a contract(s) is contingent upon the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission and the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation, Board of Director's approval. The contract(s) will not be executed by CUC until such approval is provided.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered bidders and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 21, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer, via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, CUC Senior Purchasing Technician via email christie.sablan@cucgov.org, Joseph Crisostomo, CUC Power Division, Purchasing Technician via email joseph.crisostomo@cucgov.org and Alfred Palattao, CUC Power Division, Engineer via email alfred.palattao@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids for any reason and waive any defects in said bid proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator



Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Office of the Executive Director



INVITATION FOR BIDS CUC-IFB-20-012

SR-2 SEWER LIFT STATION REHABILITATION

The Office of the Executive Director, Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) is soliciting competitive sealed bids from qualified firms for the SR-2 Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The project consists of construction of a new sewer lift station to replace the existing SR-2 sewer lift station; installation of new gravity sewer mains, manhole, force main from the new lift station to the nearest existing sewer force main, retaining wall, guard rail, installation of Owner-Furnished Contractor-Installed (OFICI) submersible duplex pump and controller; construction of a new generator building and appurtenances; demolition of the entire existing generator buildings, accessories, appurtenances and existing minor structures. The work shall be done in accordance with the Project Plans and Specifications and without disruption to the daily operation of the sewer system. CUC requires the Project to be completed in **270 calendar days** from date of award of contract.

The project is funded by a grant from the United States of Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA). The award of this project is contingent upon receipt of approval for project award from USEPA.

Prospective Bidders must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division. The Bid Package may be obtained from the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section, by cash, check or credit card in the amount of \$200.00 (non-refundable) for one IFB package set.

A Pre-Bid Conference followed by site visits will be held on **February 20, 2020 at 10:00 AM (ChST)** at the CUC Main Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Room No.17, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building.

One (1) Original and Five (5) Hard Copies of the bid must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-IFB-20-012, SR-2 Sewer Lift Station Rehabilitation Project" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) March 10, 2020**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids mailed via postal or courier service must be received on or before due date and time or post-marked before due date and time.

Bid shall be submitted on the provided Bid Forms. Bidders are required to complete all Bid Forms. Bidders may supplement this form as appropriate. Bids will be required to be submitted under a condition of irrevocability for a period of 60 days after submission. Late submissions and conditional bids will not be considered.

A Bid Guarantee of fifteen (15%) percent of the total bid price must accompany the bids. The security deposit may be in cash, certified check, cashier's check, or bid bond executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. A *Payment Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent and a *Performance Bond* of one hundred (100%) percent of the total bid price will be required upon the execution of the contract by the successful bidders. The Payment and Performance bond must be executed by a surety company holding a certificate of authority from the United States Secretary of Treasury as an acceptable surety. Surety Company must be authorized to do business in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands or otherwise secured in a manner satisfactory to CUC, for the protection of all persons supplying labor and material to the contractor or its subcontractors for the performance of the work provided for in the contract.

All insurers' questions, concerns and qualification shall be handled by the Department of Commerce Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC). The OIC is tasked with regulating and monitoring compliance to the CNMI's Insurance Code (Title 4, Division 7). *Bidders are required to submit a clearance from the OIC certifying their insurer of choice is in compliance with the CNMI's Insurance Code.*

Bidders are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This bid and the ensuing contract shall be executed pursuant to the CUC Procurement Regulations.

This Invitation for Bids does not commit CUC to the award of a contract or contracts, nor to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of bids in anticipation of a contract. Bidders are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the bidders due to lack of information or understanding of the bid requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a bid under the contract.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from registered Proponents and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on February 24, 2020** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Officer via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Nicolette Villagomez, CUC Water & Wastewater Engineer via email address nicolette.villagomez@cucgov.org and Christie Sablan, CUC Purchasing Technician, Senior via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any imperfection in the bid proposal in the best interest of the government. All bids shall become the property of CUC.

GARY P. CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY BOYER SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

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Results of CNMI's 2017 Economic Census now out

The results of the 2017 Economic Census of the Commonwealth are now out, according to a press statement yesterday from the Department of Commerce's Central Statistics Division.

Every five years, the U.S. Census Bureau collects data and reports the economic conditions of all sectors of American businesses across the nNation by conducting the Economic Census and the Economic Census of Island Areas (CNMI, Guam, American Samoa, US Virgin Islands).

The 2017 Economic Census give information based on what was happening in the CNMI economy at the time it was conducted. The CNMI is currently experiencing extraordinary economic circumstances as a result of devastating natural disasters and now the coronavirus.

"We are a resilient community and the recovery and the data from this important economic report can be used to assist us in our policy formulations and planning as we seek every means in moving our economy in a positive direction," the statement quoted Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios as saying.

Commerce Secretary Mark O. Rabauliman explained that the Economic Census of Island Areas is the most comprehensive measure of the economy and provides industry statistics for the entire Commonwealth as a whole, and for Saipan, Tinian, and Rota individually.

"I am very grateful for the participation of all our businesses on the three islands in providing the data needed. The CNMI's Census response rate of close to 90% compared to 75% response rate in the U.S. mainland is phenomenal," Rabauliman said. "I would like to thank my Central Statistics Division staff for a job well done including all of the government agencies who played important roles in the successful completion of the CNMI's Economic Census."

The Economic Census was a collaborative effort between the CNMI Department of Commerce's Central Statistics Division and the U.S. Census Bureau's Economic Census section. U.S. Economic Census assistant survey director staff chief Robert Nusz and supervisory survey statistician of the Economic Census section Lawrence Montgomery III visited the CNMI last week to meet with CNMI leadership and release the report.

During their visit Nusz said, "The U.S. Census Bureau has

ON THE NET

■ <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/economic-census/about/island-areas.html>

released the results of the 2017 Economic Census of Island Areas covering the CNMI. Estimates are available for the CNMI overall and for the three municipalities at the 2-through selected 5-digit North American Industry Classification System code levels for all covered NAICS codes that meet publication standards. These statistics include the number of establishments, total employment, annual payroll and total sales and receipts or revenue. Data on expenses, inventories and a wide variety of statistics are also available for selected sectors. The Economic Census of Island Areas is conducted once every five years, for years that end in "2" and "7," and collects extensive statistics about businesses that are essential to understanding the CNMI economy. This official count serves as the foundation for the measurement of CNMI businesses and their economic impact and is a major component of the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis' annual gross domestic product estimates."

A few highlights of the results:

■ There were 1,742 total establishments in CNMI in 2017, with combined sales of over \$3.6 billion, over \$419 million in annual payroll, and 22,652 employees.

■ Of the 1,742 establish-



From left, supervisory survey statistician of the Economic Census Section Lawrence Montgomery III, Commerce Secretary Mark O. Rabauliman, Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios, U.S. Economic Census assistant survey director staff chief Robert Nusz, and CNMI Department of Commerce Central Statistics Division director Justin Andrew.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

ments in CNMI in 2017, 1,675 were in Saipan municipality, 29 were in Rota municipal-

ity and 38 were in Tinian municipality.

■ The industry with the

largest number of establishments in 2017 was Retail Trade, with 332 establish-

ments and over \$460 million in combined sales—an increase from 284 establishments and over \$314 million in sales in 2012. Within Retail Trade, there were 27 establishments in the Motor vehicle and parts industry, NAICS code 441, with combined sales of over \$80 million.

All dollar values are expressed in current dollars and are not adjusted for price changes. The Economic Census of Island Areas covers only businesses with paid employees.

All 19 tables containing 2017 Economic Census of Island areas data covering the CNMI can be accessed at data.census.gov. (PR)



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NEWS BRIEFS

Police nabs wanted man

Police arrested Sunday a habitual offender who has been wanted since last Friday on theft and reckless driving charges.

Officers of the CNMI Department of Public Safety arrested Patrick Hernandez Muña last Sunday night soon after spotting him in Garapan. At that time, he was considered armed and dangerous as among the items he allegedly had stolen

from a home last on Feb. 4. included a gun.

**Muna**

Police officers were conducting patrol on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at about 10pm and were on the lookout for Muña when one of the officers spotted him at the Dollar Poker parking lot in Garapan and notified dispatch.

At about 10:23pm, police executed the arrest warrant on Muña for the charges of reckless driving, theft of a vehicle, fleeing or attempting to elude

a police officer, possession, and receiving stolen property.

The stolen firearms and ammunition have not been recovered as of present time.

Muña was brought to the Department of Corrections where he was booked and detained.

If you notice someone in recent possession of any firearm, report it. Dial 911 immediately. If you wish to remain anonymous, call the CNMI Crime Stoppers Hotline at 234-7272. *(Saipan Tribune)*

Scheduled water outage on Wednesday

There will be a scheduled water service interruption for the areas of Capital Hill 1200 Block, 1300 Block, Wireless Ridge, Eggi Drive, Marshall Loop and for customers along Capital Hill Isa Drive to the Kagman Mobil gas station tomorrow, Feb. 12, from 8am to 4pm. Commonwealth Utilities Corp. customers in the affected areas should expect restoration of water services soon after.

The water outage will allow CUC's water operations personnel to perform repairs on five service line leaks on Marshall Loop in Capital

Hill. As a result of the waterline repair, a more reliable water system will be provided to the community.

For more information, contact the CUC Customer Call Center (664-4282) or monitor its Facebook page for the latest updates (<https://www.facebook.com/CommonwealthUtilitiesCorporation/>). *(PR)*

Survivors, caregivers support group meeting on Feb. 13

All people facing cancer, their

family members, and caregivers are invited to the next Commonwealth Cancer Association's monthly support group meeting scheduled for Thursday, Feb. 13, 2020, starting at 5:30pm at the Hyatt Regency Saipan's Chamolinian Room. The guest speaker is Helen C. Sablan, director, CNMI State Medicaid Agency, Office of the Governor.

To RSVP or for more information, call the CCA at 682-0050 or email ccamarianas@gmail.com. *(PR)*

Customer service training on March 10

The Saipan Chamber of Commerce will kick off its first training of 2020 with a Customer Service seminar, facilitated by Jim Arenovski of Island Training Solutions on March 10, from 9am to 12pm at Suite 604, sixth floor of the Marianas Business Plaza in Susupe.

Participants will enjoy a half-day instructional presentation, inclusive of training materials and refreshments. Deadline to register for the training is Tuesday, March 3, 2020.

Training is \$50 for Chamber members and \$60 for non-members.

With today's economic landscape, there is no better time than now to ensure your staff is equipped with the customer service skills needed to retain and expand your customer base.

This customer service training will provide hard-proven techniques that will increase customer retention, create positive interactions, boost morale with customers and

in turn- gain loyal customers for years to come! From front-line employees to accountants, this training is for everyone. It is essential that your team is ready and willing to serve with excellence.

During this seminar, participants will learn how to model appropriate gestures to provide a remarkable experience to retain and grow client relationships, ensure the competitive advantage of repeat business, and elevate the level of your company's customer service by discovering simple strategies and techniques that can be implemented immediately. Motivate your staff to impress every customer that walks in your door and to provide them with the ultimate experience.

To register or inquire more information, contact training coordinator Noelani McMahon at coordinator2@saipanchamber.com or call the Chamber office at (670) 234 -7150. Members can also register online at www.saipanchamber.com/events. *(PR)*

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

Main Office: SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
2nd Floor Arrival Bldg.
P.O. BOX 501055 • SAIPAN • MP 96950
Phone: (1-670) 237-6500/1 • Fax: (1-670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com •
Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

**NOTICE OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that there will be a Joint Airport and Financial Affairs Committee Meeting on Thursday, February 13, 2020, beginning 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (November 01, 2019)**
- II. Public Comments**
- III. Old Business:**

1. Airport Operators Committee Updates/Report
2. Business Gross Revenue Tax (BGRT)
3. Airline Users Agreement
4. Star Marianas Air
5. Saipan International Airport Improvements (Ad hoc) Committee
6. Saipan Airport CPA Accounting/CIQ Office Renovations – A&E Design Services
7. Solar Updates
8. CUC Water well near Tandem Skydive
9. General Aviation Updates
10. Electronic Signboard

IV. New Business:

1. Mobil
2. Rota Concession Consultation Services
3. Fiscal Year 2018 Audit
4. Supplemental Budget Request – Delta Dock Repairs
5. Supplemental Budget Request – Rota Airport Drainage Improvement
6. Miscellaneous Fees
7. Bond Issuance
8. Procurement Rules and Regulations
9. Helicopter Concerns
10. CUC Power Plant 3
11. Lease Renewal/Amendment:
 - a. American Red Cross
 - b. POI Aviation
 - c. Star Marianas Air – Fuel
 - d. Star Marianas Air – Hangar
12. Boutique Air/TSA
13. Tinian Car Rental Concession CPA-RFP-002-20-Authority Concession Grant CRT-2020-01–02
14. Financial Affairs Committee Report
15. Airport Facilities Committee Report

- V. Executive Session (if needed)**
- VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements**
- VII. Adjournment**

Persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items. A time limit may be imposed. for oral testimony.

Barrie C. Toves
Airport Facilities Committee Chair

Ramon A. Tebuteb
Personnel Affairs Committee Chair

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

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**NOTICE OF BOARD COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

The Commonwealth Ports Authority hereby gives notice that Board Committees on Seaport Facilities and Personnel Affairs will be holding special meetings on Friday, February 14, 2020, beginning 9:30 a.m. in the Aircraft Rescue and Fire Fighting (ARFF) Classroom located in the Airport Fire Station at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport on the island of Saipan.

AGENDA**SEAPORT FACILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING**

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (October 31, 2019)**

II. Public Comments**III. Old Business:**

1. Seaport Police Boat
2. A/E design for Seaport Ramp Paving
3. Echo Dock - Evaluation Plan
4. Asia-Pacific Ship Investment Inc.
5. Industrial Drive
6. Tinian Marine Stevedore

IV. New Business:

1. Rota Seaport Restroom
2. Pacific Subsea
3. Saipan Stevedore Lease
4. Updated Committee Report

V. Executive Session (if needed)**VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements****VII. Adjournment****PERSONNEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MEETING**

- I. Call to Order, Roll Call, Adoption of Agenda, Adoption of Minutes (December 20, 2019)**

II. Public Comments**III. Old Business:**

1. Organizational Chart
2. Additional staff: IT

IV. New Business:

1. Employment Contract – Rota Ports Manager
2. Employment Contract – Port of Saipan Manager
3. Resolution for Former Board Chairman +Rex I. Palacios
4. Updated Committee Report

V. Executive Session (if needed)**VI. Miscellaneous/Announcements****VII. Adjournment**

Persons are welcome to attend and to submit written or oral testimony on the agenda items. A time limit may be imposed.

Pete P. Reyes
Seaport Facilities Committee Chair

Joseph M. Diaz
Personnel Affairs Committee Chair

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 SAIPAN, MP 96950

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9910(a), the Sixteenth CNMI State Board of Education hereby gives notice that there will be a Special Board Meeting on Wednesday, February 12, 2020 at 4:30 p.m. at the Board of Education Conference Room, Building 1241, Capitol Hill, Saipan.

AGENDA¹**I. Preliminary**

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Adoption of Agenda

II. Public Comments²**III. Unfinished Business****IV. New Business**

1. Injunction

V. Executive Session³

1. Legal Updates
2. Personnel
3. Other matters

VI. Discussion of Agenda for next Board meeting**VII. Adjournment**

¹ In the event that the items on the agenda are not completed, the meeting will recess and reconvene on the following day or at the most expeditious date and time determined by the Board.

² Pursuant to BOE Policy 0415, public comments are limited to 30 minutes. We ask that remarks be limited to 3 minutes each. Everyone is welcomed to submit written comments.

³ Pursuant to 1 CMC § 9912, the Board may vote to meet in executive session at any time.

USS *Bunker Hill* makes port visit in Saipan

Thirty naval officers and about 300 sailors were on Saipan this weekend for some rest and recreation after long days of being out at sea. USS *Bunker Hill* arrived on Saipan Friday morning for a port visit after 21 days of departing its San Diego homeport on Jan. 17, 2020.

At the invitation of Capt. Kurt Sellerberg, Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, first lady Diann T. Torres, and their fam-

ily were onboard USS *Bunker Hill* on Saturday afternoon.

Torres expressed his appreciation to Sellerberg for the tour and for choosing the Commonwealth as a destination for the sailors' rest and recreation.

"I want to welcome Capt. Sellerberg and the crew of the USS *Bunker Hill* to Saipan," said Torres. "I am especially appreciative that you have chosen to come here, and I



Gov. Ralph DLG Torres, first lady Diann T. Torres, their family and other guests pose in front of the USS *Bunker Hill* on Saturday afternoon.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

hope that you all get a chance to enjoy and appreciate what our island has to offer and its rich history with our U.S. military. On behalf of the people of the Commonwealth, I would like to extend our gratitude to you, the officers and sailors for safeguarding our security in the region. We wish you all continued safe journey."

Torres continues to seek out other economic opportunities for the Commonwealth as part of efforts to expand the CNMI's economic base and that includes discussions with the leadership of the Department of Defense to advocate for the Commonwealth as a

destination for military ships in the region.

"I would also like to extend my appreciation to Rear Adm. John Menoni and Maj. Gen. Suzie Vares-Lum for their responsiveness to our request and in advocating on our behalf to encourage all fleets in the region to visit our islands. USS *Bunker Hill* is the beginning of many visits we hope to receive this year," said Torres.

A Ticonderoga-class guided missile cruiser, USS *Bunker Hill* is part of the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* Carrier Strike Group deployed to the Indo-Pacific region. (PR)

Election Commission awarded \$600K grant

In an effort to help improve the overall efficiency of elections held in the CNMI, the Commonwealth Election Commission was recently awarded \$600,000 in grant funding through the Help America Vote Act of 2020.

This funding will be used to help purchase upgraded voting equipment, enhance the voting registration system, improve campaign finance track and cyber security, and it will allow staff members to reach certification levels under the Certified Elections & Registration Administrator.

Gov. Ralph DLG Torres and Lt. Gov. Arnold I. Palacios would like to thank Mona

Harrington, acting executive director at the U.S. Election Assistance Commission, and her staff for their assistance throughout the grant process and the local Election Commission for working to secure this funding for the Commonwealth.

"Increasing voter count accuracy, protecting our voters and candidates' personally identifiable information, and developing professional capacity are priorities for the CEC, and we are pleased to announce that we are continuing to take steps to help improve the overall experience for our voters and candidates alike," the administration said. (PR)

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WINNERS RESIDENCE



Opinion

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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EDITORIAL

Poor moon shot: Billionaire seeks girlfriend for space trip

Single billionaire seeks female companion for out-of-this-world date.

You may have seen the news that Japanese billionaire and would-be space tourist Yusaku Maezawa is looking for a girlfriend to join him on a trip to the moon.

The 44-year-old who made his fortune as an online fashion retailer is recruiting contestants for a reality show that will eventually choose his date for a future trip to the moon aboard Elon Musk's SpaceX.

Maezawa's dream date must be at least 20 years old and, obviously, interested in going into space. He also wants a woman who "wishes for world peace," for what that's worth.

Sorry to break it to Maezawa, but the best would-be moon dates are already taken—by NASA. And they're going to the moon on their own impressive merits, not on the arm of a rich and lonely space tourist.

The space agency announced last year that its newest moon mission, Artemis, will send a woman and man to the moon in 2024. The new lunar exploration, which is named for the goddess of the moon and sister of Apollo, is designed to establish a long-term exploratory presence on the moon.

Also earlier this month, NASA introduced the latest class of 11 new astronauts, six of whom are women.

Since the dawn of human space travel, more than 60 women from eight countries have been to space—50 of them Americans.

American women have commanded the International Space Station and the Space Shuttle. Last year, two American astronauts took the first all-female space walk.

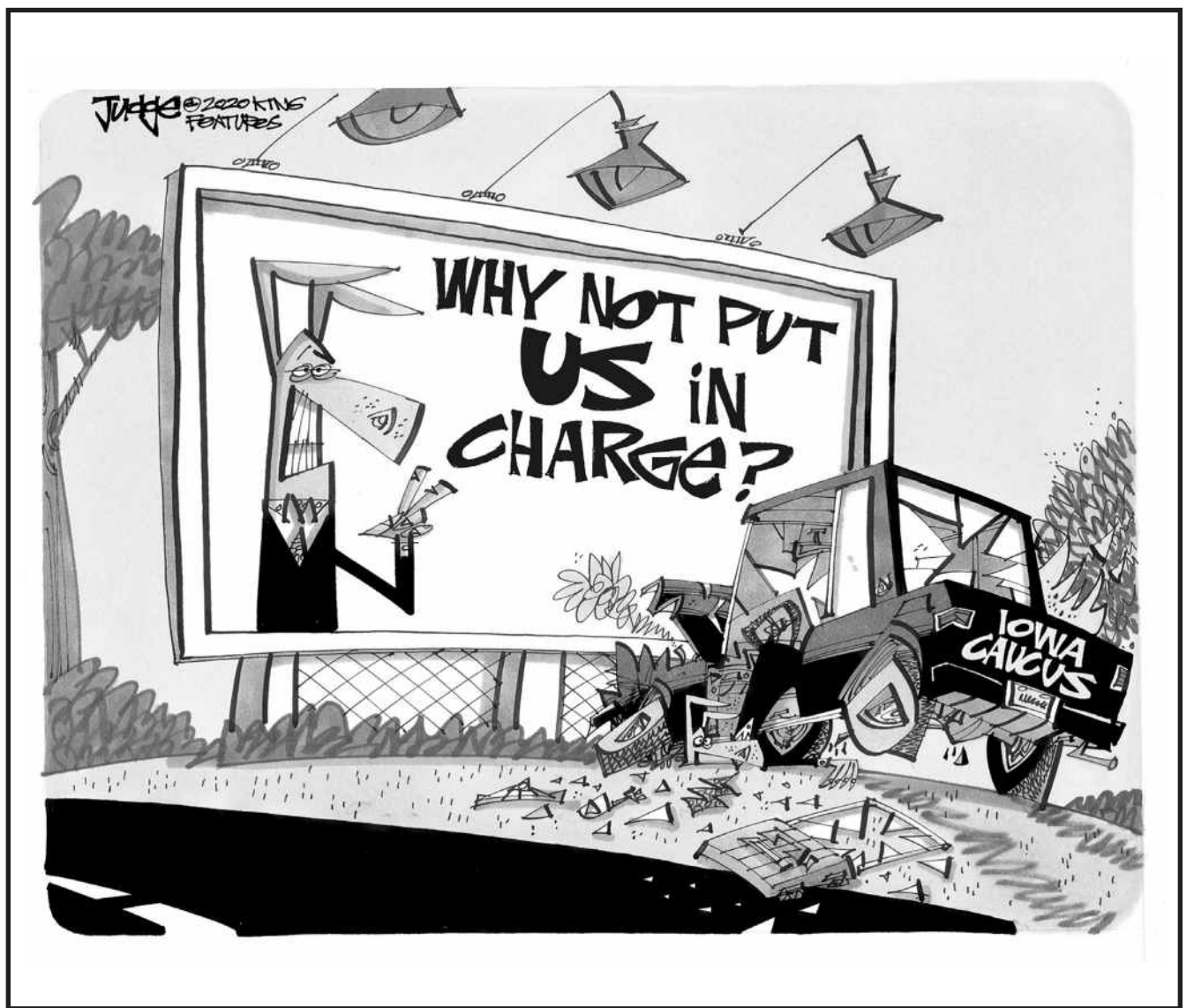
None of them accomplished their firsts by catching the eye of a rich bachelor.

Perhaps Maezawa's frivolous quest for a space date isn't too demeaning. After all, he's not aiming to get to the moon on his merits either.

But serious, scientific space exploration isn't a game, and NASA's commitment to specifically send a woman to the moon on its next mission is important and long overdue.

The first woman on the moon should not be a billionaire's reality-show-winning plus one, but an accomplished, skilled astronaut. There are plenty of worthy contenders for the honor.

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Finding comfort in unexpected places

Before reading about all of the world's messes, I need to be in a good place, soothed and comforted. Prepared. So I read the comics first.

Then I turn to the advice columns, being a particular fan of "Ask Amy" and "Miss Manners," then horoscopes (Capricorn for me; Pisces for my husband), then "Today in History" and "Today's Birthdays."

Only afterwards do I read the headlines. Only after I've strengthened myself through pleasure, gratified that the sexy pin-ups of my generation are distinctly postmenopausal while astonished the heartthrobs of my youth also age—"Wait, he's 109?"—do I feel remotely prepared to face the news.

That's why, as unlikely as it might seem, I find the daily papers calming. A lot of my friends don't get it. These days, they use newspapers to make tents under which they hide from anything about politics, various global health crises, the hugely inflated-but-never-discussed national deficit (projected to reach \$1.02 trillion this year, according to the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office) and arguments about why some women can dance onstage during the Super Bowl while other women prepare guacamole in the kitchen.

I am not alone in needing comfort before facing reality—but I am baffled by where some people find sources of comfort. For example, how can running 26.2 miles be happy-making? Yet there are dozens of otherwise sensible individuals with whom I can have meaningful conversations concerning otherwise reasonable topics who nevertheless "run marathons" for "fun" and because they find it "satisfying."

The same goes for gardening. I have friends who not only create beauty and bounty in their gardens but also write books about teaching others how to do the same, even as they offer—as a decorative border, so to speak—history and cultural context for the idea of gardens themselves. Author Suzanne Staubach's "A Garden Miscellany" can almost convince me to head off the deck and into my own backyard.

Almost.

But I don't find nature cozy, and I find anything that's fuzzy in nature hideous. So I am happy to read the book and look at the pretty illustrations while sitting indoors under a fuzzy blanket (which is not alive, doesn't sting and won't wiggle unless I do it first).

I have faced disappointment and contempt and faced the narrow-eyed suspicion used on women accused of witchcraft for

By **GINA BARRECA**

The Hartford Courant

Gina Barreca is a board of trustees distinguished professor of English literature at the University of Connecticut and the author of 10 books. She can be reached at www.ginabarreca.com.



admitting that the outdoors annoys me. It's fine.

From my city childhood onwards, the last place I would go to feel safe, renewed or refreshed is the woods. The woods terrify me. Who knows what's crouching behind the stump? I would breathe more deeply and feel more relaxed on the D-Train from the Bronx to Coney Island than I would from a walk around Walden Pond. I do acknowledge the Sixth Avenue Express wouldn't smell as good.

Of course I find comfort in the world in less eccentric ways. Like Navy veteran Elizabeth Williams, the very promise of fresh clean sheets on the bed and a long, hot shower can calm me down on a hectic, crumpled, nervous day.

Like Patti White, a friend from my graduate school days, food nourishes me in all kinds of ways. As Patti put it, for her, comfort comes from "BBQ ribs with collards. In other words, local foods in places that welcome me and remember me." Foods made with love by places that you feel know you and care for you? That's comfort food, for real.

And cooking? That's gloriously soothing so long as there's no deadline and you're making food for people you're welcoming and remember, and as long as somebody else washes up.

Finally, so to speak, I find the thought of our own collective mortality soothing.

The last part of the newspaper I read every morning is the obituaries. My friend from college, Nicholas Newman, does the same, and I suspect we're not the only ones who find them comforting rather than unnerving. Death notices keep everything in perspective. Some break your heart, but most lift your spirits. They remind us that that this day will pass and be gone forever whether we seize it, ignore it, embrace it, enjoy it or tear it apart.

Everybody gets the same 24 hours. There's comfort in that.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

The dangers of delaying probate

We like to kick the can down the road. We do tomorrow what we should do today. We avoid the difficult in favor of the easy. In so doing, we allow tiny problems to develop into snarling dragons that threaten to rain fire on our lives.

But while watching dragons devastate King's Landing in an inferno of flame and fury may make for compelling television, there's no law that says we need to let problems snowball into an avalanche. There's no rule that prevents us from nipping a problem in the bud. And there's no edict that prohibits us from addressing a situation while it's easy to solve.

And yet it happens all the time. For instance, I frequently see people kick the can down the road when it comes to probate (the court-supervised process for distributing a person's property after they die). And by the time they get to it, a relatively simple process has grown from elementary-school arithmetic into college-level calculus.

There are reasons for the delay, of course. Maybe the family did not realize that probate was necessary. Or they did not want to think about it while they were grieving and then never got around to it. Perhaps they were intimidated by the process, and thus never started. Or they didn't want to spend the money needed to complete probate.

But here's the thing: Except in rare cases, you will have to do the probate eventually. And the longer you delay, the harder, slower, and more expensive it will get. So, putting it off will generally backfire.

Consider an example. Let's say Grandpa Juan passed away 20 years ago, leaving several pieces of property to Grandma Gertrude and their five kids. A few years later Grandma Gertrude passes away. And then a few years later, two of the kids die, each with several kids of their own. And now the family wants to sell some of the land originally owned by Grandpa Juan. Can they?

No. Because they don't own the land. The Estate of Grand-

pa Juan does. Thus, to transfer the property, Grandpa Juan's estate will need to go through probate. And the same for the estates of Grandma Gertrude and the two kids that died. In short, the family cannot lawfully sell or lease the land until four probates have been completed.

Now let's make it more complicated. The previous example assumed that the whole family was in agreement about the sale/lease. But what if that wasn't the case. What if one of the heirs did not agree? Or they wanted an unreasonable amount of money? Or they insisted on silly contract terms that a lessee or buyer could not agree to? One family member could derail an otherwise promising transaction.

How about if the family had informally split up the property without going through probate, and then you wanted to sell or lease your piece of the property? As before, you technically do not own the property. The Estate of Grandpa Juan does. So, you would have to probate the Estate of Grandpa Juan and potentially several of the other estates. And if the rest of the family did not want to pitch in, you would wind up footing the whole bill yourself.

Clear ownership of real estate is not the only reason to begin probate shortly after a person dies. Convenience is another. Never will it be easier to do the probate than right after the person passes away. At that point, the paper trail is relatively simple to follow. But if you wait a year (or 10), financial statements disappear, memories fade, and information gets lost.

And the same for valuable assets. If probate is delayed, valuable assets tend to disappear into the pockets and homes of the most opportunistic (or brazen) relative. Promptly beginning probate, by contrast, increases the chances of the property being fairly distributed to the family.

Another advantage of filing for probate quickly is that it shortens the time for creditors to stake a claim to the estate. In other words, once an estate posts notice that probate began, unknown creditors have 60 days to notify the court that they

FINE PRINT

By **JORDAN SUNDELL**

Special to the Saipan Tribune



Jordan Sundell is a lawyer primarily practicing business, real-estate, estate-planning, and asset-protection law. He formerly worked for the CNMI Supreme Court and Bridge Capital and is now general counsel for several real-estate companies, including JZ Group. His columns—focused mainly on real estate, small business, and estate planning—are published every other Tuesday. Be sure to like the Fine Print on Facebook!

have a claim against the estate. If this notice is not supplied, however, then creditors have three years from when the person died. Just a little difference.

In special cases, delaying could also raise civil (and perhaps criminal) liability. How so? Let's say that Grandpa Juan had a will and told Grandma Gertrude to file it with the court after he died. But she didn't file the will or start a probate because doing so meant she would receive less than she would get from inaction. Any heir who received less because Grandma Gertrude hid the will would have a lawsuit against her.

Bottom line: The CNMI has an endemic of people putting off probates for years and decades. These delays muddy the property records and complicate real-estate transactions every day. If you want to have clear ownership of your property and position yourself to profit from the next real-estate boom, start probating your property today.

This column is for informational purposes only and is not intended to be taken as legal advice. For your specific case, consult a lawyer.

Birth tourism crackdown is turning govt agents into the pregnancy patrol

As a consular officer, I issued hundreds of tourist visas to pregnant women traveling to the United States whose primary purpose was so-called birth tourism—gaining U.S. citizenship for their child by having their baby here. It was a frustrating experience for me, because I mainly saw wealthy and elite foreign nationals secure U.S. citizenship for their newborn this way, and I couldn't help but think of the millions already here who had to wait years to become citizens.

But I made an uneasy peace with the practice, fearing what alternatives might arise if the U.S. ever actively sought to prohibit it. Since the administration put in place new rules in late January that make it harder for pregnant foreign nationals to enter the U.S. on tourist visas, we are about to see what those alternatives are. I fear they will not be pretty.

For President Trump and his supporters, this is a promise kept in his battle against "birthright citizenship," the granting of citizenship to children born in the United States despite the parents' nationality or immigration status. If you're born here, you're an American. The right is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution.

However, the consular officer corps, which is predominantly white, has now been given more discretion to decide who can enter the U.S. They will have to rely more heavily on their own judgment in denying visas to a largely brown and black global populace. Cultural bias will become more of a factor than it already is. In addition, the new rules allow consular officers to use "visual cues" to determine whether an applicant is trying to hide a pregnancy, essentially giving the officers license to body shame.

Pregnancy tests will not be administered and officers cannot ask for them, the State Department announced. But how long will it take before applicants feel compelled to bring negative pregnancy test results to consular officers and for officers to accept them? The officers will be forced to spend

more time serving as the pregnancy patrol instead of focusing on more important matters such as security background checks and facilitating legitimate travel.

As I worked on the visa line with other consular officers in the 2010s, applicants seeking to give birth were evaluated in the same way as those who wanted to enter the U.S. to seek medical treatment. State Department regulations state that foreign nationals seeking to enter the U.S. for medical reasons must demonstrate they have the means to pay for treatment, do not pose a security risk and have ties to their home country that would compel their return. Pregnant foreign nationals often carried documentation showing that hospital payments for child delivery had been arranged and displayed letters from American doctors and hospital administrators detailing the plan of birth along with any prenatal or postnatal visits.

When I was processing visa applicants, almost every pregnant foreigner I spoke with was from a wealthy family. They would invariably say they had no intention of residing in the United States with their newborn "American" child. For this class of individuals, the newborn child would probably serve as "insurance" should their respective home countries fall apart and as an investment in making it easier to immigrate to the U.S. should it become necessary. For others, having an American child and that blue U.S. passport was cultural currency, the ultimate status symbol back home.

While I may have disdained the practice, officers are required to evaluate applicants by engaging in frank conversations about their intentions. It's far better for applicants to honestly talk about their intentions to give birth—and use reputable doctors and hospitals—than rely on the criminal gangs and shady consultants that have come to dominate the birth tourism field.

The new restrictions on tourist visas for pregnant women will only bring these illicit businesses more customers. The

By **CHRISTOPHER RICHARDSON**

Los Angeles Times



Christopher Richardson was a consular officer from 2011 to 2018.






birth tourism industry also thrives on coaching applicants to lie about their pregnancy and produce fake documents. Lying can cause a person to be permanently barred from entering the U.S., and officers rely on honest interactions to make valid, solid decisions.

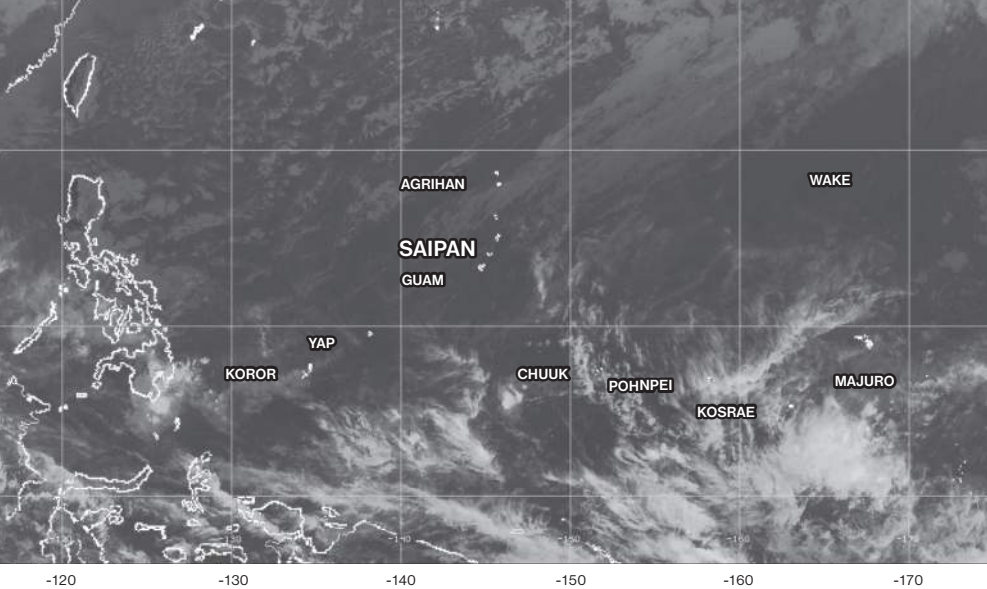
Instead of cracking down on consular officers, the U.S. should crack down on the birth tourism industry. A big part of the problem could be addressed by identifying hospitals and other medical facilities that profit from the foreign-national birth business and impose prohibitive fines on them if they continue to engage in the practice. These facilities often work hand in glove with birth tourism consultants, so this would help suppress that element as well.

But if Trump's true goal is to tighten the restrictions on birthright citizenship—and appease his supporters—he should seek a constitutional amendment, like Ireland did in 2004, even if it is a notoriously difficult process. Ireland eliminated the automatic right to citizenship for anyone born there and in most cases requires foreign national parents to prove a "genuine link" to Ireland based on residency before a child born there can be considered a citizen.

Instead of coming up with an actual solution to birth tourism, Trump has chosen to use government agents to circumvent the law—and satisfy his base.

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN									
TODAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY		SATURDAY	
									
Breezy. Mostly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.		Windy. Partly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 30 mph.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers.		Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	
84°	75°	84°	75°	85°	75°	85°	75°	87°	77°
YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE									



PICTURE TIME: 7:47 AM, MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2020
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Satellite imagery showed patchy clouds over the Marianas this morning and expect mostly cloudy skies today. A shear line approaching from the north will push across the local area through today and tonight. The shear line will keep skies mostly cloudy through Wednesday. Deep-layer moisture will not be so high with 700 mb relative humidity remaining below 50 percent therefore only isolated showers are expected. High pressure building out over the Northwest Pacific behind the shear line will increase winds over the local area. Expect breezy, and sometimes windy, conditions Tuesday through at least Saturday of the coming week. Wind may gust up to 30 mph Tuesday through Thursday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA			▲	▼	°F
Guam and Rota	Windy	82° / 74°			
Palau	Partly Cloudy	84° / 78°			
Yap	Showers	86° / 79°			
Chuuk	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°			
Pohnpei	Windy	85° / 79°			
Kosrae	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°			
Majuro	Thunderstorms	86° / 80°			

AROUND THE GLOBE			▲	▼	°F
Auckland	Mostly Cloudy	75° / 61°			
Beijing	Sunny	55° / 30°			
Hong Kong	Showers	72° / 66°			
Honolulu	Showers	77° / 66°			
London	Windy	45° / 37°			
Los Angeles	Sunny	73° / 50°			
Manila	Mostly Sunny	88° / 73°			
Melbourne	Showers	75° / 64°			
Miami	Partly Cloudy	80° / 73°			
New York	Rain	50° / 36°			
Osaka	Partly Cloudy	59° / 50°			
Paris	Partly Cloudy	48° / 39°			
Busan	Rain	57° / 50°			
Rome	Partly Cloudy	66° / 46°			
Salem	Thunderstorms	73° / 59°			
San Francisco	Sunny	63° / 45°			
Seoul	Showers	48° / 37°			
Tokyo	Sunny	52° / 36°			
Washington, DC	Mostly Sunny	57° / 45°			



NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY			FEET
3:07 AM	LOW TIDE	-0.57	
9:50 AM	HIGH TIDE	1.89	
3:36 PM	LOW TIDE	0.78	
8:48 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.91	

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Wednesday	6:43 AM	6:19 PM
Thursday	6:42 AM	6:19 PM
Friday	6:42 AM	6:20 PM
Saturday	6:41 AM	6:20 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	-	8:15 AM	8:22 PM
Wednesday	-	9:02 AM	9:22 PM
Thursday	-	9:47 AM	10:21 PM
Friday	-	10:32 AM	11:18 PM
Saturday	-	11:18 AM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 6, 2020							
DEPARTURES				ARRIVALS			
SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)				GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN			
UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily	UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA156	6:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	UA112	4:45pm	5:26pm	2, 4, 6
SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)				NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN			
SKY816	4:35pm	7:30pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7	SKY811	10:15am	3:00pm	Daily
SKY816	5:05pm	8:00pm	6				
SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)				BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN			
7C3451	3:20am	6:30am	Daily	7C3452	9:35pm	2:30am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7
				7C3452	10:05pm	2:30am+1	3
SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)				SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN			
TW308	2:05am	6:05am	Daily	OZ6233	7:30am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6
OZ626	2:10am	6:05am	1	OZ623	8:10am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7	7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ626	3:35am	7:20am	4	TW309	11:10am	4:40pm	Daily
7C3403	4:35am	8:35am	Daily	OZ625	7:30pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ6243	3:10pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6	TW307	7:45pm	1:05am+1	Daily
OZ624	3:30pm	7:20pm	1, 3, 5, 7	OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily	OZ625	9:05pm	2:25am+1	3
TW310	5:40pm	10:15pm	Daily	7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily
SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)				MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/701	2:10am	10:35am	1 via ICN	UA189/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
OZ626/701	2:50am	10:35am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
UA117/183	9:15am	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	OZ702/625	12:05pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
UA117/193	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via GUM-ROR	OZ702/625	12:05pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
UA156/183	6:20pm	9:50pm	Daily via GUM	UA192/174	10:40pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA156/193	6:20pm	11:50pm	2 via GUM-ROR	UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
				OZ704/6233	11:45pm	12:50pm+1	2, 4, 6 via ICN
				OZ704/623	11:45pm	1:40pm+1	1, 3 via ICN
SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)				HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN			
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN	OZ746/6233	12:35am	12:50pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 5, 6, 7 via ICN	OZ746/623	12:35am	1:40pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN
OZ626/721	3:35am	11:50am	4 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ6243/9661	3:10pm	11:15pm	2, 4, 6 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
OZ624/9661	3:30pm	11:15pm	1, 3, 5, 7 via ICN	OZ722/625	1:15pm	2:25am+1	3 via ICN
LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, BC SkyMark ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. (The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)							
STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.							
SAIPAN TO ROTA				1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily	1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily	1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily	1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
				1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
ROTA TO SAIPAN				1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily	1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily	1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily				
				TINIAN TO SAIPAN			
ROTA TO GUAM				FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily	2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
				2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
GUAM TO ROTA				2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily	2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
				2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
SAIPAN TO TINIAN				2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY	2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily	2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily	2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
				2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

Business

US jobs top estimates with 225,000 gain, wages accelerate

By READE PICKERT
BLOOMBERG NEWS

U.S. employers hired at a stronger-than-expected pace in January as wage gains rebounded in the latest signs of a durable jobs market, though revisions to prior years pared employment growth. (Bloomberg)—Payrolls increased by 225,000 after an upwardly revised 147,000 gain in December, according to a Labor Department data Friday that topped all estimates of economists. The jobless rate edged up to 3.6%, still near a half-century low, while average hourly earnings climbed 3.1% from a year earlier.

Annual revisions to historical data took some shine off one of President Donald Trump's main bragging points, cutting the 2018 job gain to 2.31 million from 2.68 million. The 2017 and 2019 gains were about 2.1 million, meaning each year under Trump—while still strong—has been slightly slower than the 2.35 million rise in the final year of the Obama administration.

The solid hiring defies expectations for step down to a slower pace of job growth as businesses delay investment, and exceeded the 175,000 average monthly gain for 2019. The pace supports Federal Reserve policy makers' view of



ELIZABETH FLORES/MINNEAPOLIS STAR TRIBUNE/TNS
Windows are framed at the Marvin factory in Warroad, Minn., in 2017.

the labor market as strong, and is more than sufficient to keep up with population growth.

Average hourly earnings rose 0.2% from the prior month, slightly less than estimated but an acceleration from the December reading.

Payroll gains were broad-based and topped the median estimate for 165,000. Education and health services em-

ployment added 72,000, while transportation and warehousing rose by the most in a year.

Warm Weather
The unexpected job strength also reflects robust gains in weather-sensitive sectors including construction, which climbed by 44,000 for the strongest growth in a year in an unseasonably warm month.

Weekly hours worked

held at 34.3 hours for a third month, lower than a year ago. Economists look to hours worked for early signs of labor market softening as com-

panies often cut hours before laying off workers.

The participation rate, or share of working-age people in the labor force, climbed to

This is what it takes to be in the 1% around the world

By BEN STEVERMAN AND
READE PICKERT
BLOOMBERG NEWS

threshold for the 0.01% is more than \$10 million.

What They Owe

Some countries make special efforts to attract the global 1% and their wealth. Singapore and Monaco, for example, have turned themselves into tax shelters where the well-off can live and invest under a lighter tax and regulatory burden. Some nations rich in oil and gas can also afford not to tax the top 1%.

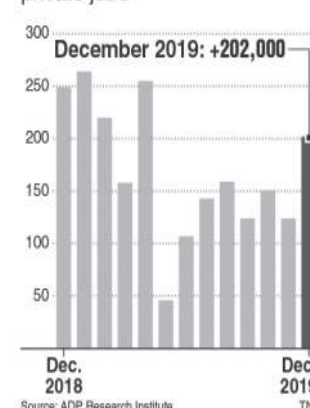
In most of the world, though, politicians use taxes to try to level the playing field between the wealthy and everyone else. In many nations with a progressive income tax, the highest rates apply only to the richest portion of the 1%.

What They Spend

The rising wealth of the world's top 1% has prompted

Changes in employment

In thousands of nonfarm private jobs



63.4%. Steady participation rate gains reinforce Fed Chair Jerome Powell's desire to sustain the expansion "so that the strong job market reaches more of those left behind."

While a widely-watched manufacturing gauge signaled expansion for the first time in six months in January, the drop in payrolls for manufacturers was steeper than estimated. Employment in the sector slumped by 12,000 for a third drop in four months, driven by a decrease in payrolls for motor vehicles and parts workers.

a boom in luxury spending, especially in China. McKinsey & Co. estimates spending on personal luxury goods like accessories, jewelry and watches is up 47% since 2012.

Many members of the top 1% have little interest in designer handbags or high-end fashion, of course. Housing, education and child care are far more common expenses for this group, and their costs can vary widely around the world.

A common theme from city to city is a fierce competition for English-speaking international schools, according to Gail Rabasca, executive vice president at relocation consulting firm Chamness WorldWide, as expatriates fight for spots with local children whose parents "want more competitive educational positioning and intercultural awareness for their children."

Models demand 'meaningful action' from Victoria's Secret after harassment claims

By AMY HANLINE AND HAN-NAH YASHAROFF
USA TODAY

More than 100 models have signed a letter to Victoria's Secret CEO John Mehas demanding that the lingerie company increase efforts to "protect the people they profit from."

The Model Alliance's call to action comes less than a week after a damning report by The New York Times detailed accusations of "misogyny, bullying and harassment" within Victoria's Secret.

The letter demands "meaningful action" from Victoria's Secret and asks that the company joins the Alliance's RESPECT program to help prevent future abuse. The program, according to the letter, is the "only existing accountability program designed by and for models" that requires "employees, agents, vendors, photographers and other contractors to follow a code of conduct that protects everyone's safety on the job."

The letter indicates that Victoria's Secret and its parent company L Brands have refused to join the RESPECT program, which the Alliance has called for since December 2018, and requested again "five months ago."

In a statement to USA TODAY, L Brands spokesperson Tammy Roberts Myers said the company "absolutely" shares a "common goal with Model Alliance to ensure the safety and well-being of models."

Myers noted the company's photo shoot procedures, which were implemented last May and updated in August and require an independent party present at photo shoots, a third-party hotline and increased screenings and trainings.

"We're proud of the progress we've made and remain committed to continuous improvement," the statement added. "We're always open to engage with those looking to make improvements in the industry."

She also directed USA TODAY to a statement from L Brands' Independent Board of Directors in response to The Times report.

"We can assure you that the company is intensely focused on the corporate governance, workplace, and compliance practices that directly impact our 80,000 associates around the world, nearly 90% of whom are female," the statement read. "With the adoption in recent years of even more robust anti-harassment policies, hotline reporting, and training, we have made significant strides in ensuring that the company provides a safe, welcoming, and empowering workplace for every associate. We regret any instance where we did not achieve this objective and are fully committed to continuous improvement and complete accountability."

Model Alliance's letter includes signatures from models Iskra Lawrence and Amber Valletta.



DREAMSTIME/TNS

A couple drives out in a vintage beige Jaguar XK120.

Nation

Gunman ambushes NYC police twice in 12 hours, spawns outrage

NEW YORK (AP)—A gunman was arrested after he ambushed police officers in the Bronx twice in 12 hours, authorities said, wounding two in attacks that brought outrage from officials who blamed the violence on an atmosphere of anti-police rhetoric.

Robert Williams, 45, of the Bronx, was captured after he walked into a police station in the Bronx and started shooting shortly before 8 a.m. Sunday, police said. His shots struck a lieutenant in the arm and narrowly missed other police personnel before he ran out of bullets, lay down and tossed his pistol, officials said.

That attack came just hours

after Williams approached a patrol van in the same part of the Bronx and fired at two officers inside, wounding one before escaping on foot, police said.

All of those shot are expected to recover, authorities said.

"It is only by the grace of God and the heroic actions of those inside the building that took him into custody that we are not talking about police officers murdered inside a New York City police precinct," Police Commissioner Dermot Shea said at a news conference.

Williams is being charged with attempted murder, criminal weapon possession and resisting arrest, police said in an

email late Sunday identifying him as the suspect. He was hospitalized Sunday evening, the Bronx prosecutor's office said. It wasn't clear whether he had an attorney to speak for him.

Williams had been upset since his own son died after being shot in the Bronx, the suspect's grandmother told the New York Post.

"He was depressed at times because his son got shot in the street," Mary Williams, 80, told the newspaper. "That was his only child."

The officer injured in the first shooting, Paul Strofollino, was released from the hospital Sunday to applause from colleagues. The officer, a bandage

on his neck, gave a thumbs-up.

Shea called Williams a "coward" and said he had a long criminal history, including a 2002 shooting and carjacking in which he fired a gun at police. He was paroled from prison in 2017 after an attempted murder conviction, Shea said.

The commissioner also lashed out at criminal justice reform activists who have demonstrated in recent months against excessive force by police, including a large protest in Grand Central Terminal. The protests, he suggested, helped create an anti-police environment.

"These things are not unrelated. We had people march-

ing through the streets of New York City recently," Shea said. "Words matter. And words affect people's behavior."

Shea didn't offer any evidence that Williams knew of those protests or was influenced by them.

Mayor Bill de Blasio, who won office partly on a promise to reform overly aggressive policing of minority communities, also suggested that anti-police sentiment had gotten out of hand.

"Anyone who spews hatred at our officers is aiding and abetting this kind of atmosphere; it is not acceptable," de Blasio said. "You could protest for whatever you believe in, but you cannot vilely attack those

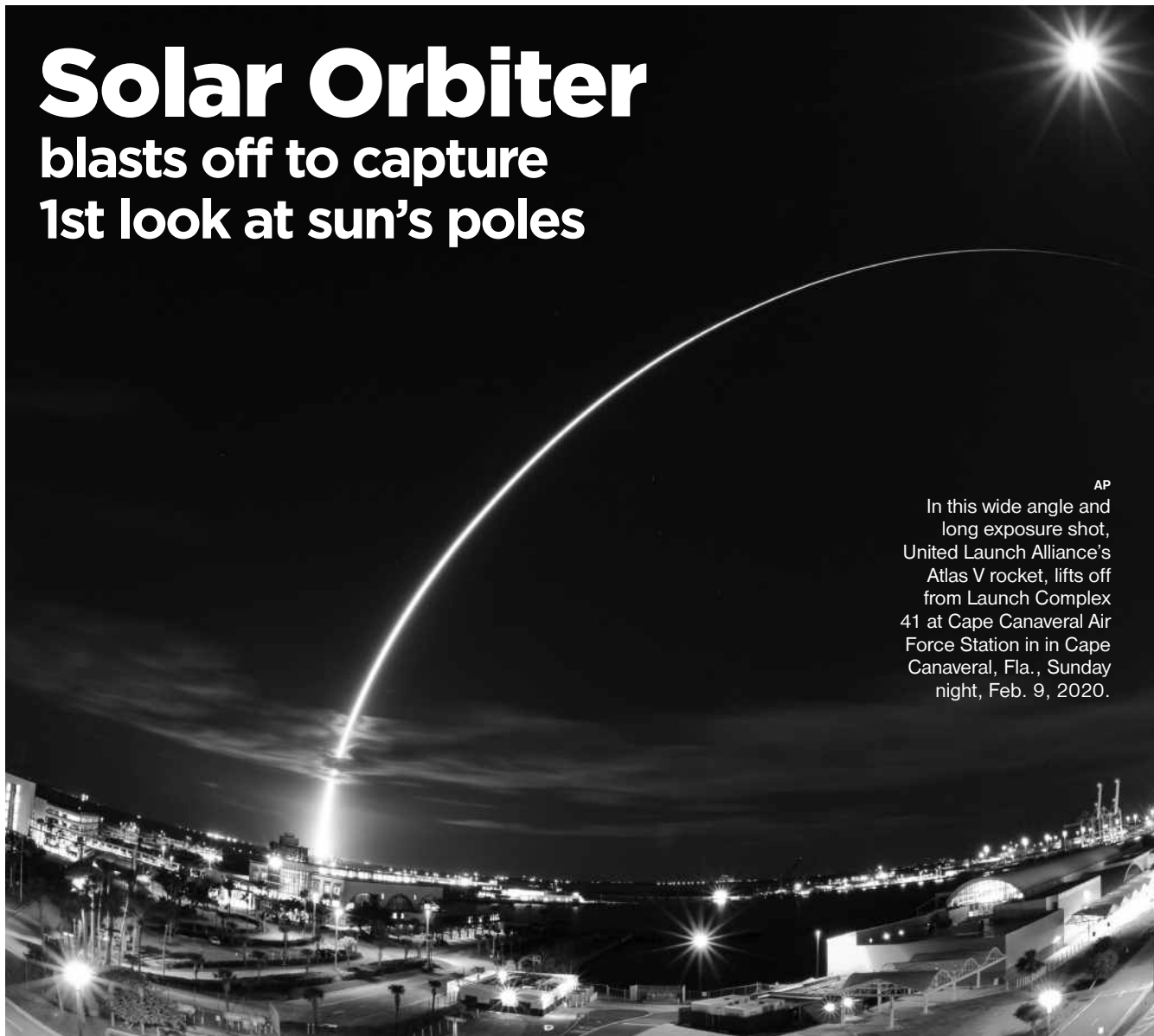
who are here to protect us. It creates this kind of dynamic."

The attacks recalled other unprovoked assaults on police officers sitting in their patrol vehicles.

In 2017, a gunman killed Officer Miosotis Familia as she sat in her patrol vehicle in the Bronx. In 2014, two officers, Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu, were shot dead in their patrol car in Brooklyn by a man upset about recent police killings of unarmed black men.

The killings of Ramos and Liu had also followed large protests. Some officers blamed de Blasio for expressing solidarity with the demonstrations and turned their backs on the Democrat at the funerals.

Solar Orbiter blasts off to capture 1st look at sun's poles



AP
In this wide angle and long exposure shot, United Launch Alliance's Atlas V rocket, lifts off from Launch Complex 41 at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Cape Canaveral, Fla., Sunday night, Feb. 9, 2020.

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP)—Europe and NASA's Solar Orbiter rocketed into space Sunday night on an unprecedented mission to capture the first pictures of the sun's elusive poles.

The \$1.5 billion spacecraft will join NASA's Parker Solar Probe, launched 1 1/2 years ago, in coming perilously close to the sun in order to unveil its secrets.

While Solar Orbiter won't venture close enough to penetrate the sun's corona, or crown-like outer atmosphere, like Parker, it will maneuver into a unique out-of-plane orbit

that will take it over both poles, never photographed before. Together with powerful ground observatories, the sun-staring space duo will be like an orchestra, according to Gunter Hasinger, the European Space Agency's science director.

"Every instrument plays a different tune, but together they play the symphony of the sun," Hasinger said.

Solar Orbiter was made in Europe, along with nine science instruments. NASA provided the 10th instrument and arranged the late-night launch from Cape Canaveral.

Nearly 1,000 scientists and

engineers from across Europe gathered with their U.S. colleagues under a full moon as United Launch Alliance's Atlas V rocket blasted off, illuminating the sky for miles around. Crowds also jammed nearby roads and beaches.

The rocket was visible for four full minutes after liftoff, a brilliant star piercing the night sky. Europe's project scientist Daniel Mueller was thrilled, calling it "picture perfect." His NASA counterpart, scientist Holly Gilbert, exclaimed, "One word: Wow."

Within an hour, the satellite separated neatly from the upper

stage and was flying on its own.

Solar Orbiter—a boxy 4,000-pound (1,800-kilogram) spacecraft with spindly instrument booms and antennas—will swing past Venus in December and again next year, and then past Earth, using the planets' gravity to alter its path. Full science operations will begin in late 2021, with the first close solar encounter in 2022 and more every six months.

At its closest approach, Solar Orbiter will come within 26 million miles (42 million kilometers) of the sun, well within the orbit of Mercury.

ACROSS THE NATION

Massive firework shot over Colorado breaks world record

STEAMBOAT SPRINGS, Colo. (AP)—A massive firework launched over a Colorado ski resort town has set a record for the world's largest aerial firework. The 2,800-pound (1,270-kilogram) shell flew 2,200 feet (671 meters) above the Steamboat Springs Winter Carnival before it burst, turning the sky bright red and drawing gasps from the crowd, The Steamboat Pilot & Today reported. Tim Borden of Steamboat Springs headed the team that developed the firework over seven years. Borden first attempted to set the world record last year, but failed when the shell exploded inside the mortar without lifting off the ground, the newspaper reported. Guinness World Records representatives witnessed both attempts. Christina Conlon of Guinness said she verified the shell launched Saturday was the world's largest. The firework was 400 pounds (181 kilograms) heavier than the previous record-holder, a 2,397-pound (1,087 kilograms) explosive launched in the United Arab Emirates in 2018.

Oregon flooding abates; authorities report body found

PENDLETON, Ore. (AP)—Waters covering roads in flood-hit northeastern Oregon were starting to recede, allowing residents to return and assess the damage from weather that appears to have left one person dead. A woman who had been missing, Janet Tobkin Conley, 62, lived in one of the areas hit by floods and her body was

found Sunday by searchers and neighbors, authorities said. She appeared to have been swept away by rushing water, they said. An approximately 10-mile (16-kilometer) stretch of Interstate 84 south of Hermiston, Oregon, remained closed Sunday due to flood damage and authorities say it could be a week before it reopens. A detour is in place. Oregon National Guard troops aboard two helicopters airlifted 21 people to safety on Saturday. The helicopter missions continued Sunday and volunteers also assisted flood victims.

Police: Texas teen killed by bully he had stopped earlier

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP)—Police in Arlington, Texas, say a 16-year-old boy was fatally shot by another teen who the victim had stopped from bullying another boy a few days earlier. Police Officer Christopher Cook told reporters Friday that Samuel Reynolds had said "he started having some trouble with the suspect" in the days after stopping the suspect from bullying a smaller boy. During a Friday night vigil for Reynolds outside Arlington High School, student Russell Laniyan said Reynolds once gave him shoes during a soccer game so he could play while Reynolds sat out. "I think this just encourages us to go out and to be like Sam and to follow the example that Sam has set for us," Laniyan said during the vigil. Cook said the shooting was captured on security video and a .40 caliber shell casing was found at the scene, but the weapon has not been located.

Asia

Mainland China virus cases rise again after earlier decline

BEIJING (AP)—Mainland China has reported another rise in cases of the new virus after a sharp decline the previous day, while the number of deaths grew by 97 to 908, with at least two more outside the country.

On Monday, China's health ministry said another 3,062 cases had been reported over the previous 24 hours, raising the Chinese mainland's total to 40,171.

Earlier, France closed two schools after five British visitors contracted the virus at a ski resort. Malaysia, South Korea and Vietnam reported one new case each.

Meanwhile, the mother of a physician who died last week in the hardest-hit city of Wuhan said she wants an explanation from authorities who reprimanded her son for warning about the virus.

Monday's rise was a turnaround from a significant reduction in new cases reported Sunday, 2,656, down by about 20% from the 3,399 new cases reported in the previous 24-hour period. That had prompted optimism that the "joint control mechanism of different regions and the strict prevention and control measures have worked," in the words of a spokesman for the National Health Commission, Mi Feng.

Also Sunday, new cases



A worker in a tractor operates electrostatic spraying to disinfect the workplace following the coronavirus outbreak, in Yantai city in east China's Shandong province, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020. AP

were reported in Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, the U.K. and Spain. More than 360 cases have been confirmed outside mainland China.

"Dramatic reductions" in the pace of the disease's spread should begin this month if containment works, Dr. Ian Lipkin, director of Columbia University's Cen-

ter for Infection and Immunity, said in an online news conference on Sunday. He assisted the World Health Organization and Chinese authorities during the outbreak of SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

Warmer weather will reduce the virus's ability to spread and bring people out

of enclosed spaces where it is transmitted more easily, Lipkin said. However, he said, if new cases spike as people return to work after the Lunar New Year holiday, which was extended to reduce the risk of spreading the virus, then "we'll know we're in trouble."

The new U.K. case was the nation's fourth, while Spain

reported its second, as European authorities sought to contain the spread of the virus by tracking down people who came into contact with those infected.

Both of the new cases were acquired during trips to France, officials said.

The new U.K. case is a known contact of a previous-

ly confirmed case there, the country's Chief Medical Officer Professor Chris Whitty said, adding that experts "continue to work hard tracing patient contacts."

In Spain, authorities were working to identify everyone who came into contact with a British man whose case was detected in Mallorca, a popular vacation island in the Mediterranean Sea, Spain's National Microbiology Center said.

The fatality toll has passed the 774 people believed to have died of SARS, another viral outbreak that originated in China. The total of 37,198 confirmed cases of the new virus vastly exceeds the 8,098 sickened by SARS.

Japan reported six more cases among 3,700 passengers and crew aboard the quarantined cruise ship Diamond Princess, bringing the number of infections on the vessel to 69. The new cases are an American passenger in her 70s and five crew members—four Filipinos and a Ukrainian.

South Korea reported a new case in a 73-year-old woman whose relatives visited Guangdong province in southern China, raising its total to 27. The family members, a 51-year-old South Korean man and a 37-year-old Chinese woman, were confirmed infected later Sunday.

Families of Thai shooting victims wait for answers, bodies

NAKHON RATCHASIMA, Thailand (AP)—Sirirat Nualraksa blinked back tears as the ambulances delivered gurneys bearing cloth-shrouded bodies to the morgue of a public hospital after a vengeful Thai soldier killed 29 people and wounded dozens of others in a shopping mall rampage.

Sirirat lost her sister, brother-in-law and young nephew in the attack. She was among dozens of victims' relatives sitting in plastic chairs and on concrete benches outside the morgue Sunday, waiting to fill out paperwork to lay claim to their loved ones and receive compensation from the Thai government's criminal victims' fund.

On Facebook, she had talked with her sister, 33-year-old Papatchaya Nualraksa, as she hid with her husband and their 2-year-old in a supermarket storage room. Sirirat advised her sister to nurse her son so he wouldn't make noise and risk revealing the family to the gunman, whose rounds of automatic fire echoed around the seven-story mall.

In a Facebook call, Pa-

patchaya told her sister that she was scared.

"Gunshots could be heard endlessly and loudly. But there was no sign" of a rescue, Sirirat said. Still, "both of us thought that she would be able to get out."

They exchanged several Facebook messages before Papatchaya went quiet.

About 13 hours later, the standoff ended when Thai special forces fatally shot the gunman, whom authorities identified as Sgt. Maj. Jakrapanth Thomma.

Sirirat, 43, later received photos from a friend, an officer who responded to the mall, of the body of her sister, arms wrapped around her 2-year-old, and the boy's father nearby.

At the hospital, a team from the government mental health department handed out cake and tissues, screening people for abnormal expressions of grief, according to Wimonwan Panyawong, a clinical psychologist who traveled from Bangkok northeast to Nakhon Ratchasima, a city of 150,000 people about 250 kilometers

(150 miles) away.

The hospital's lone forensic pathologist was joined by two others from out of town, but officials said it could be days before autopsies were complete and the bodies could be handed to families.

Kanokphon Watchawan, 28, came from Bangkok to retrieve the body of her brother, Wanchai, who was killed while working at a store on the mall's second story. Kanokphon said hospital authorities told her to come back for him on Tuesday.

Officials said the assailant was angry over a financial dispute, first killing his commanding officer and the officer's mother-in-law and then seizing several assault weapons and ammunition from his army camp. He opened fire and wounded at least three soldiers before stealing an army vehicle to flee, shooting as he drove to the mall where shoppers ran in terror.

A funeral was held Sunday for a 13-year-old middle school student who was riding his motorbike when Jakrapanth fatally shot him en route

to the mall.

Gun violence is not unheard of in Thailand, and the shooting in Nakhon Ratchasima comes just a month after another high-profile mall shooting in the central Thai city of Lopburi. In that case, a masked gunman carrying a handgun with a silencer killed three people, including a 2-year-old boy, and wounded four others as he robbed a jewelry store.

By Sunday evening, survivors were streaming back to the site of the rampage, Terminal 21 Korat, a gleaming airport-themed shopping mall, to retrieve vehicles abandoned during the police evacuation. The ground floor was spotless, with lights on, shops left open and a Haagen-Dazs ice cream kiosk freezer humming.

Palawan Ployudee, 50, whose gift shop on the mall's third floor sells her hand-painted clothes, bags and other decor, first hid other shop owners and customers in the back of her store. When they realized they were exposed, they ran to a security guard office and later fled to safety down an internal fire escape.

Rain extinguishes Australian wildfire and causes flooding

CANBERRA, Australia (AP)—Torrential rain lashing Australia's east coast on Sunday has extinguished a major wildfire and caused widespread flash flooding.

Rain put out the Currowan Fire south of Sydney late Saturday after it destroyed 312 homes and razed 500,000 hectares (1.2 million acres) over 74 days, the New South Wales state Rural Fire Service said.

Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons said he hoped the heavy rain would move inland from the coast and drench more major fires that have burned for months.

Fitzsimmons bid farewell at a Sydney Airport hotel on Sunday to 21 American and 21 Canadian firefighters who were heading home after their deployment battling Australian blazes.

A severe weather warning was in place on Sunday along most of the New South Wales coast and parts

of Queensland to the north, with heavy rain, damaging winds, abnormally high tides and damaging surf forecast.

The State Emergency Service reported six flood rescues overnight near Grafton, north of Sydney. They were mostly people who became stranded while attempting to drive through floodwater.

Some east coast towns have received in recent days their heaviest rainfall in five decades.

On Australia's northwest coast, Tropical Cyclone Damien made landfall late Saturday as a category 3 storm and weakened as it moved inland.

Several buildings had lost roofs, but authorities had yet to assess the full extent of the damage on Sunday.

Australian wildfires that have killed at least 33 and destroyed more than 3,000 homes in an unprecedented fire season that began late in a record-dry 2019.

World



Waves batter the coastline at Saltcoats, North Ayrshire, Scotland, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020.

AP PHOTOS



Men try to control the flow of flood water, outside a property, in Appleby-in-Westmorland, as Storm Ciara hits the UK, in Cumbria, England, Sunday Feb. 9, 2020.



A view of a man piling sandbags outside a house, in Appleby-in-Westmorland, Cumbria, England, Sunday Feb. 9, 2020



Workers cut a fallen tree, in Kolding, Denmark, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020.

Hurricane-force winds pound UK and Europe, upend travel

LONDON (AP)—Storm Ciara battered the U.K. and northern Europe with hurricane-force winds and heavy rains Sunday, halting flights and trains and producing heaving seas that closed down ports. Soccer games, farmers' markets and cultural events were canceled as authorities urged millions of people to stay indoors, away from falling tree branches.

The storm, named by the U.K.'s Met Office weather agency, brought gusts of 97 miles per hour to the Isle of White and 93 mph (150 kph) to the village of Aberdaron in northern Wales. Propelled by the fierce winds, a British Airways plane was thought to have made the fastest New York-to-London flight by a conventional airliner.

The Boeing 747-436 completed the 3,500-mile transatlantic journey in 4 hours and 56 minutes, landing 102 minutes early and reaching a top speed of 825 mph (1,327 kph), according to flight tracking website Flightradar24. Two Virgin Airlines flights also roared across the Atlantic, with all three smashing the previous subsonic New York-to-London record of 5 hours and 13 minutes, Flightradar24 reported.

Storm surges ate away at beaches and pounded rock cliffs and cement docks. The Met Office issued more

than 250 flood warnings, and public safety agencies urged people to avoid travel and the temptation to take selfies as floodwaters rose. Residents in the town of Appleby-in-Westmorland in northwest England battled to protect their homes amid severe flooding as the River Eden burst its banks.

At least 10 rail companies in Britain sent out "do not travel" warnings, while nearly 20 others told passengers to expect extensive delays. The strong winds damaged electrical wires and littered train tracks with broken tree limbs and other debris, including a family trampoline.

Huge crowds of stranded, frustrated travelers were seen at London's King's Cross and Euston train stations. Train crews planned to work all night to try to restore service, but Monday morning commutes were expected to be long and chaotic.

Dozens of flights were canceled at London airports due to heavy wind. Heathrow Airport and several airlines consolidated flights Sunday to reduce the number of cancellations. British Airways offered to rebook customers for domestic and European flights out of Heathrow, Gatwick and London City airports. Virgin Airlines canceled some flights.

Lufthansa airlines said there would be numerous cancellations and delays beginning Sunday afternoon and running until at least Tuesday morning.

The airline planned to keep operating long-haul flights at its main Frankfurt hub. Eurowings, a budget subsidiary of Lufthansa, canceled most flights for the duration of the storm.

Brussels Airport also saw delays or cancellations.

Two huge ports on either side of the English Channel, Dover in England and Calais in France, shut down operations amid high waves. Dover was partially reopened after being closed for 10 hours. Ferries stopped running there and across the region, including in the turbulent Irish Sea and North Sea.

The Humber Bridge in northern England also shut down, a move its website said was only the second time the massive bridge had been entirely closed.

Breaking with her usual Sunday routine, Queen Elizabeth II did not attend church in Sandringham to keep her out of harm's way during the storm.

The Met Office said most of the the U.K. likely had seen the worst of Ciara by 9 p.m., when the storm had moved on to northeastern Scotland. However, forecasters predicted more blustery weather Monday, including much colder temperatures and snow in some northern areas.

"While Storm Ciara is clearing away, that doesn't mean we're entering a quieter period of weather," Met

Office meteorologist Alex Burkill said. "Blizzards aren't out of the question."

In Ireland, an estimated 10,000 homes, farms and businesses had their power knocked out Sunday. National weather agency Met Eireann warned that a combination of high tides, high seas and stormy conditions had created a significant risk of coastal flooding, particularly in the west and northwest.

Fierce winds knocked out electricity in northern France as well. Paris authorities sent out a warning to residents and tourists alike to stay indoors for their own safety. Parks and cemeteries in the city of Lille and nearby towns shut down as strong winds cracked heavy branches. Open-air markets closed early.

Luxembourg and the German city of Cologne announced that all school children could stay home Monday to avoid travelling under dangerous conditions.

In Germany, where the storm was known as "Sabine," national railway operator Deutsche Bahn canceled long-distance trains to destinations most at risk, including Emden and Norddeich in Germany's northwestern corner, the northern city of Kiel and the North Sea island of Sylt.

"We have learned from previous storms that it's better not to have trains travel into critical regions in the

first place," Deutsche Bahn spokesman Achim Stauss said. "What we want to avoid is trains getting stuck between stations."

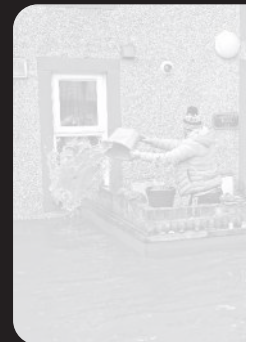
Teams of railway employees fanned out with chainsaws to remove any fallen trees blocking the tracks.

In Denmark, meteorologists warned about possible hurricane-force winds coming late Sunday, and flights were canceled out of Copenhagen. Danish authorities warned motorists not to cross large bridges, including the Great Belt Bridge that links eastern and western parts of Denmark.

The storm was also expected to smash into southern Norway's coast and hit southern and western parts of Sweden.

In the world of sports, dozens of soccer games, horse races, rugby matches and other events were called off, including the Premier League match between Manchester City and West Ham. A 10-K run in London that was expected to draw 25,000 participants was also canceled.

The Dutch football association called off all matches Sunday in the top-flight league due to safety concerns, as did Belgium's top two soccer leagues, the Jupiler Pro League and Proximus League. A German soccer league match between title challenger Borussia Moenchengladbach and Cologne was also put off.



Water splashes on the pier of the ferry pier in Dagebuell, northern Germany, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020.

Workmen clear up after tree fell on speed camera, on The Meadway as Storm Ciara hits the UK, in Tilehurst, England, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020.

People walk on top of the Feldberg mountain in a strong storm near Frankfurt, Germany, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020.

Focus

AP
Travelers wear face masks as they wait for trains the Beijing Railway Station in Beijing, Friday, Jan. 31, 2020.

Where did they go? Millions left city before quarantine

By ERIKA KINETZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS

SHANGHAI (AP)—For weeks after the first reports of a mysterious new virus in Wuhan, millions of people poured out of the central Chinese city, cramming onto buses, trains and planes as the first wave of China's great Lunar New Year migration broke across the nation. Some carried with them the new virus that has since claimed over 800 lives and sickened more than 37,000 people.

Officials finally began to seal the borders on Jan. 23. But it was too late. Speaking to reporters a few days after the city was put under quarantine, the mayor estimated that 5 million people had already left.

Where did they go?

An Associated Press analysis of domestic travel patterns using map location data from Chinese tech giant Baidu shows that in the two weeks before Wuhan's lockdown, nearly 70% of trips out of the central Chinese city were within Hubei province. Baidu has a map app that is similar to Google Maps, which is blocked in China.

Another 14% of the trips went to the neighboring provinces of Henan, Hunan, Anhui and Jiangxi. Nearly 2% slipped down to Guangdong province, the coastal manufacturing powerhouse across from Hong Kong, and the rest fanned out across China. The cities outside Hubei province that were top destinations for trips from Wuhan between Jan. 10 and Jan. 24 were

Chongqing, a municipality next to Hubei province, Beijing and Shanghai.

The travel patterns broadly track with the early spread of the virus. The majority of confirmed cases and deaths have occurred in China, within Hubei province, followed by high numbers of cases in central China, with pockets of infections in Chongqing, Shanghai and Beijing as well.

"It's definitely too late," said Jin Dong-Yan, a molecular virologist at Hong Kong University's School of Biomedical Sciences. "Five million out. That's a big challenge. Many of them may not come back to Wuhan but hang around somewhere else. To control this outbreak, we have to deal with this. On one hand, we need to identify them. On the other hand, we need to address the issue of stigma and discrimination."

He added that the initial spread of travelers to provinces in central China with large pools of migrant workers and relatively weaker health care systems "puts a big burden on the hospitals ... of these resource-limited provinces."

Baidu gathers travel data based on more than 120 billion daily location requests from its map app and other apps that use Baidu's location services. Only data from users who agree to share their location is recorded and the company says data is masked to protect privacy. Baidu's publicly available data shows proportional travel, not absolute numbers of recorded trips, and does not in-

clude trips by people who don't use mobile phones or apps that rely on Baidu's popular location services.

Public health officials and academics have been using this kind of mapping data for years to track the potential spread of disease.

A group of researchers from Southampton University's WorldPop research group, which studies population dynamics, used 2013-2015 data from Baidu's location services and international flight itineraries to make a predictive global risk map for the likely spread of the virus from Wuhan.

It's important to understand the population movements out of Wuhan before the city's lock down, said Lai Shengjie, a WorldPop researcher who used to work at China's Center for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Maybe they hadn't developed symptoms but could transmit the virus. We need to look at destinations across China and the world and focus on the main destinations and try to prepare for disease control and prevention," he said.

The last trains left Wuhan the morning of Jan. 23, cutting off a surge of outbound travel that had begun three days earlier, Baidu data shows. Nearby cities rushed to impose travel restrictions of their own. From Jan. 23 to Jan. 26, the 15 cities that Baidu data shows received the most travelers from Wuhan—a combined 70%—all imposed some level of travel restrictions.

Other nations soon followed

suit, including the United States, Australia, Singapore, New Zealand and the Philippines, all of which have sharply restricted entry for people coming from China. Others, like Italy and Indonesia, have barred flights.

WorldPop researchers found that travel out of Wuhan has historically ramped up in the weeks before Lunar New Year's Day. Based on historical travel patterns, they identified 18 high-risk cities within China that received the most travelers from Wuhan during this period. They then used 2018 flight itineraries from the International Air Transport Association to map the global connectivity of those cities.

They note that travel patterns after restrictions started rolling out on Jan. 23 will not match historical norms and that the cities they identified are initial ports of landing; travelers could have subsequently moved elsewhere.

The top 10 global destinations for travelers from high-risk Chinese cities around Lunar New Year, according to their analysis, were Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea, the United States, Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Australia.

In Africa, Egypt, South Africa, Ethiopia, Mauritius, Morocco, Nigeria and Kenya topped the list.

The African continent is particularly vulnerable because of the weaker health infrastructure in many countries, and the longer cases go undetected, the more likely they are

to spread.

"Capacity is quite weak in many African health services," Dr. Michel Yao, emergency operations manager for the World Health Organization in Africa, told the AP. This new virus "could overwhelm health systems we have in Africa."

The Africa Centers for Disease Control, formed three years ago in response to the Ebola crisis in West Africa, said screening has been stepped up at ports of entry across Africa. Egypt began screening passengers from affected areas in China on Jan. 16. Over the next eight days, Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Africa, Mauritius and Kenya all put screening systems in place. No confirmed cases have been reported.

Lai and his colleagues said they found a "high correlation" between the early spread of coronavirus cases and the geographical risk patterns they identified.

The first case of the virus outside China was reported on Jan. 13 in Thailand, followed two days later by Japan, the countries with the highest connectivity risk, according to WorldPop's analysis. Within 10 days of Wuhan's quarantine, the virus had spread to more than two dozen countries; nine of the 10 countries with the most flight connections to at-risk mainland cities also had the highest numbers of confirmed cases, mostly afflicting people who had been in China.

The pattern isn't perfect; Zhejiang province, for example, was not a top destination

from Wuhan this year, according to Baidu data, but now has among the highest numbers of confirmed cases.

"Our aim was to help guide some of the surveillance and thinking around the control measures," said Andrew Tatem, the director of WorldPop, adding that his group plans to update their analysis.

"There was a huge amount of movement out of the Wuhan region before the controls came into place," he said. "Now we're getting to stage of having data from multiple places on the scale of outbreaks elsewhere."

Scientists have identified the new virus as a coronavirus, a family of viruses that includes ones that can cause the common cold, as well as others that cause more serious illnesses, like SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome.

Many are now focused on what will happen after the second wave of the Lunar New Year rush as people once again crowd onto trains, buses and planes to head back to work. The Chinese government extended the holiday, which was supposed to end on Jan. 30, to Feb. 2. Shanghai, Beijing and several Chinese provinces ordered businesses to remain shut through Sunday, leaving the nation's great megalopolises feeling like ghost towns.

"It's in cities where people interact much more," Tatem said. "That's potentially the worry of lots of people coming back in. A few people seeding that could result in a bigger problem."

Overdrive

By EMMA JAYNE WILLIAMS
FORT WORTH STAR-TELEGRAM

The Nissan Rogue for 2020 has lots to offer to buyers looking for a small crossover: smart styling, spacious and comfortable cabin, plenty of standard and available amenities, and competitive pricing.

Rogue is exceptionally versatile, with nearly 40 cubic feet of cargo space with the rear 40/20/40 folding seat upright or 70 cubic feet with the seat folded down, and a unique Divide-N-Hide Cargo System.

Rush-hour commuters will appreciate the advanced driver-assistance technologies such as Nissan's ProPilot semi-automated driving features.

Rogue is available in three well-equipped models, in either FWD or Intelligent AWD, all with the right combination of compact overall size and generous interior roominess: S, \$25,200; SV, \$26,620; and SL, \$31,590. All-wheel drive adds \$1,350.

All models come with a responsive 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine, producing 170 horsepower and 175 foot-pounds of torque, matched with an ad-

vanced next-generation Xtronic transmission with Sport and Eco modes.

Four-wheel disc brakes with antilock braking, electronic brake-force distribution and brake assist are standard, as are hill-start assist, intelligent trace control, intelligent engine braking, and intelligent ride control.

My Rogue SV was Scarlet Ember (\$395), one of three premium exterior colors including Monarch Orange Metallic and Pearl White. Five standard exterior colors are available for the SV.

The Nissan signature chrome "V-motion" grille was bold, flanked by standard halogen Intelligent Auto Headlights with High Beam Assist and LED signature daytime running lights.

Wide rear doors allowed easy access to install child seats, and a Motion-Activated Liftgate opened onto the versatile storage system in the rear. With movable/removable panels, the cargo area could be divided several ways for maximum hauling convenience.

A bold, wavy character line ran from the front of the hood, over the wheel arch, under the

front pillar and the side mirrors, and along the belt line to the rear side window.

Inside, Zero Gravity front seats were comfortable, with cloth upholstery in Almond, and Quick Comfort heating. The seat inserts had a subtle woven mid-century pattern. The sliding/reclining second row had nine inches of fore and aft travel.

Storage in the front included a large center console with a shallow tray under the center stack with a 12-volt outlet, USB port, and auxiliary port, two cupholders, a phone-size vertical bin, a moderate-size bin under the padded armrest with a 12-volt outlet, USB outlet, and clips on the lid for pens or cables, and door pockets with bottle holders.

A Premium Package (\$1,800) added Nissan Door-to-Door Navigation, SiriusXM Traffic and Travel Link, Intelligent Around View Monitor, heated leather-wrapped steering wheel, memory driver seat and outside mirrors, electronic parking brake, Intelligent Cruise Control with Full Speed Range and Hold, ProPilot Assist, and 18-inch alloy wheels with all-season tires.

Door-to-door navigation uses an app on a smartphone to guide you directly to your destination AFTER you exit the vehicle. It also remembers the car's location, to guide you back.

Intelligent Around View Monitor offers a virtual composite 360-degree bird's-eye view of the Rogue to help with parking and maneuvering in tight spaces. Split-screen close-ups include front, rear, and curbside views.

Intelligent cruise reduces driver workload during highway driving or in traffic congestion by maintaining preset speed and distance between vehicles, controlling acceleration and deceleration, even coming to a standstill if the vehicle ahead stops. In case of sudden deceleration by the vehicle ahead or a vehicle suddenly merging into traffic, the system warns the driver with a chime or displayed alert.

ProPilot Assist combines steering, acceleration, and braking, and includes speed control, lane centering, and brake assist to help ease driver workload. The system can be deactivated by using a switch on the steering wheel. ProPilot Assist is not fully autonomous driving, merely a "co-pilot," and will go through a series of alerts

if the driver removes both hands from the wheel, even stopping the vehicle if necessary.

Nissan Connect features Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, with a 7.0-inch color touchscreen display with multi-touch control (touch, swipe, pinch) and includes navigation, security, entertainment, and lots of ways to stay in touch and keep connected to your Nissan.

You can stream music wirelessly, remotely start the car with a smartphone (includes intelligent climate control) or unlock the doors using voice commands through Amazon Alexa or Google Assistant. Bluetooth hands-free phone and hands-free text messaging assistant are standard.

Standard Nissan Safety Shield 360 included Automatic Emergency Braking with Pedestrian Detection, Rear Automatic Braking, Blind Spot Warning, Rear Cross Traffic Alert, Intelligent Lane Intervention, and Lane Departure Warning.

LATCH for child safety seats, rear child safety doorlocks, front air bags with seat-belt and occupant-classification sensors, front seat-mounted and full-length curtain side impact air bags, and Zone Body construction with front and rear crumple zones offer protection

to occupants.

A rear door alert reminds drivers to check the rear passenger area for children, pets, valuables, dry cleaning, groceries, and more. An Easy Fill Tire Alert system sounds a chime when proper tire pressure is reached.

Standard equipment included heated outside mirrors, silver roof rails; front fog lights; chrome door handles, window surround, front bumper trim and rear gate trim; and a temporary spare under the multi-level cargo floor.

Rogue is one of the most fuel-efficient vehicles in its class, rated at 26 mpg city/33 highway/29 combined for front-wheel drive. Driving mostly locally, I averaged 29.2 mpg.

The top-selling model for Nissan, Rogue has a quiet, roomy cabin with comfortable front seats and excellent overall ride quality. The Divide-N-Hide cargo system is impressive, as are safety and driver-assist technologies. Rear visibility was limited, but aided by additional technology.

My Rogue had a floor mat package with cargo-area protector and first aid kit for \$290. With \$2,485 in options and \$1,045 destination charges, my handsome front-wheel-drive Rogue SV delivered for \$30,150.



(MIKE DITZ/NISSAN MOTOR CORPORATION/TNS)

Nissan Rogue highlights include body-color heated outside mirrors with available integrated turn signals, a rear spoiler, privacy glass and roof rails.

Nissan Rogue

offers style, comfort, practicality
in a compact crossover

Motormouth: Worth it to replace tire pressure sensor batteries

Q: My tire pressure monitor light is constantly on for one or more of the original tires on my 2009 Subaru Impreza with 40,000 miles. We love the car and plan on keeping it as long as possible. My repair shop said that there is a limited life on the sensors and the batteries, and when we replace the tires, which I am doing soon, to just replace all the sensors. However, the sensors are \$80 apiece.

Can I just put in the old-fashioned valves and just keep an eye on the pressure, or do I need new sensors?

A: Tire pressure monitoring sensor batteries are designed to last 10 years. It sounds as though yours may have died. The law does not demand that

you replace the sensors, but for your peace of mind, convenience and safety's sake, it makes sense to replace them. I have found much lower prices for aftermarket ones.

Q: I have a 2002 Hyundai Accent and the spark plugs have removable terminal nuts made of aluminum. I have found that after about 5,000 miles or so the engine will give a brief miss when I load the engine too much in lower gears. I have found that if I take emery board and clean the aluminum bullet tips the problem is fixed for another 5,000 miles or so.

The aluminum corrodes as evidenced by the blackish gray on them. I am wondering if you have any suggestions for

getting brass tips or to prevent the aluminum corrosion?

A: I am not aware of replacement tips for spark plugs, but that isn't really what you need. Go to your local auto parts store and buy some dielectric grease. Sometimes it is sold as tune-up grease. Squeeze a dab into each spark plug boot. Not only does it prevent corrosion, it makes boot removal easier the next time.

I use it on all automotive bulbs, battery terminals and other electrical contacts, as well. Although you can buy a tube for a few bucks, some stores sell small, one use packets.

Q: Rear window wipers have become the norm for hatchbacks, SUVs and station wagons. Why are they not offered for passenger cars (se-

dans and coupes)?

A: Rain, road scum, dust and such gets on the back glass of square-shaped vehicles. This goes for SUVs as well as semis. Because cars are more streamlined, they do not suffer the same problem.

Q: I have a 2017 Subaru which I bought used from CarMax. I absolutely love all the safety features. I'm not sure I am getting correct information from my Subaru dealer, however. On a monthly basis, I get a report card on my computer that says my windshield water is low. This is not true. My concern is that if that is incorrect, what else is also incorrect. My dealer brushes it off.

A: As long as you know that the reservoir has washer fluid,

By BOB WEBER
Chicago Tribune



Bob Weber is a writer and mechanic who became an ASE-certified Master Automobile Technician in 1976. He maintains this status by seeking certification every five years. Weber's work appears in professional trade magazines and other consumer publications. His writing also appears in automotive trade publications, Consumer Guide and Consumers Digest. Send questions along with name and town to Motormouth, Rides, Chicago Tribune, 160 N. Stetson Ave., Fourth Floor, Chicago, IL 60601 or motormouth.tribune@gmail.com.

this should not be a major concern. The fluid level sensor may be shot or, from personal experience, some washer fluid brands may contaminate the sensor. I had to replace mine.

Q: Back in the day, it was common knowledge that every once in a while you had to rev up and railroad your car to

get the carbon out. Was that true then, and is it true now?

A: Not sure about back then, but it's not any more. But a friend's wife was pulled over driving her Mustang. She told the trooper that her husband told her to gun it from time to time to get the carbon out. She didn't get a ticket.

Life & Style

Making Oscar history, 'Parasite' wins best picture



The cast and crew of "Parasite" accept the award for best picture at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. AP

LOS ANGELES (AP)—In a milestone win that instantly expanded the Oscars' horizons, Bong Joon Ho's masterfully devious class satire "Parasite" became the first non-English language film to win best picture in the 92-year history of the Academy Awards.

"Parasite" took Hollywood's top prize on Sunday night, along with awards for best director, best international film and best screenplay. In a year dominated by period epics—"1917," "Once Upon a Time ... In Hollywood," "The Irishman"—the film academy instead went overseas, to South Korea, to reward a contemporary and unsettling portrait of social inequality in "Parasite."

True to its name, "Parasite" simply got under the skin of Oscar voters, attaching itself to the American awards season and, ultimately, to history. The win was a watershed moment for the Academy Awards, which has long been content to relegate international films to their own category. But in recent years, to diversify its membership, the Academy of Motion Pictures Arts and Sciences has invited may more overseas voters.

Multiple standing ovations greeted Bong's several wins. "I am ready to drink tonight," Bong said, prompting roars from the crowd. Unexpectedly called up again for best director, Bong saluted his fellow nominees, particularly Martin Scorsese, and concluded: "Now I'm ready to drink until tomorrow."

After the Dolby Theatre had emptied out, the "Parasite" team still remained on the stage, soaking in their win. Backstage, Bong was still gobsmacked. "It's really f—ing

crazy," he told reporters, clutching his awards.

The victory for "Parasite"—which had echoes of the surprise win by "Moonlight" over "La La Land" three years ago—came in a year when many criticized the lack of diversity in the nominees and the absence of female filmmakers. But the triumph for "Parasite," the Palme d'Or-winner at last year's Cannes Film Festival, enabled Hollywood to flip the script and signal progress, nevertheless. No Korean film had ever won an Oscar before.

In doing so, the film academy turned away another history-making event, again denying Netflix its first best-picture win despite two contenders in "The Irishman" and "Marriage Story," and a big-spending awards campaign blitz.

Mendes' audaciously conceived World War I film "1917," made to seem one continuous shot, had been the clear favorite heading into Oscars, having won nearly all the precursor awards, including top honors from the Producers Guild, the Directors Guild, the Golden Globes and the BAFTAs. In the end, "1917" went home with three awards for its technical virtuosity: Roger Deakins' cinematography, visual effects and sound mixing.

All of the acting winners—Brad Pitt, Renee Zellweger, Joaquin Phoenix and Laura Dern—went as expected. While Pitt, notching his first acting Oscar, had regaled audiences with one-liners in the run-up to Sunday, he began his comments on a political note.

"They told me I have 45 seconds to speak, which is 45 seconds more than the Senate gave John Bolton this week," Pitt said, alluding to the impeachment hearings. "I'm think-

ing maybe Quentin does a movie about it."

Pitt said the honor had given him reason to reflect on his fairy-tale journey in the film industry, going back to when he moved to Los Angeles from Missouri. "Once upon a time in Hollywood," said Pitt. "Ain't that the truth."

Zellweger completed a comeback, winning her second Academy Award for her fragile but indomitable Judy Garland in "Judy." Dern won for her performance as a divorce attorney in Noah Baumbach's "Marriage Story." Accepting her first Oscar, Dern thanked her in-attendance parents, "my legends, Diane Ladd and Bruce Dern."

Phoenix, long one of Hollywood's most respected actors, took best actor for his limber but morose Joker. In his acceptance speech, Phoenix spoke deliberately about a host of issues, including sexism and racism in the film industry, ecological disaster and vegetarianism.

"I've been a scoundrel in my life. I've been selfish, I've been cruel at times and hard to work with. But so many of you in this room have given me a second chance," Phoenix said. When people guide each other toward redemption, he added, "that is the best of humanity."

He concluded quoting a lyric of his deceased brother, River Phoenix: "Run to the rescue with love and peace will follow."

For the 87th time, no women were nominated for best director this year, a subject that was woven into the entire ceremony—and even into some attendees' clothing. Natalie Portman wore a cape lined with the names of female filmmakers who weren't nominated for their direction, including Lulu Wang ("The Farewell"),

Greta Gerwig ("Little Women") and Mati Diop ("Atlantics").

Coming on a rare rainy day in Los Angeles, the ceremony was soggy and song-heavy. Some performances, like Eminem's performance of "Lose Yourself," were unexpected (and drew a wan response from Scorsese). All of the song nominees performed, including Elton John who won with his longtime songwriting partner Bernie Taupin for their "Rocketman" tune.

The hostless ceremony opened on a note of inclusion, with Janelle Monae performing "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood" and her own song, "Come Alive," with an assist from Billy Porter. "I'm so proud to be standing here as a black queer artist telling stories," Monae said. "Happy Black History Month."

Two former Oscar hosts, Chris Rock and Steve Martin, provided the opening monologue. "An incredible demotion," Martin called it. Martin also reminded that something was missing from this year's directing nominees. "Vaginas!" Rock replied.

There were milestones beyond "Parasite." In winning best adapted screenplay for his Nazi satire "Jojo Rabbit," the New Zealand filmmaker Taika Waititi became the first indigenous director ever to win an Oscar. He dedicated the award to "all the indigenous kids in the world who want to do art, dance and write stories."

"We are the original storytellers," Waititi said.

"Joker" composer Hildur Gudnadottir became only the third woman to ever win best original score. "To the girls, to the women, to the mothers, to the daughters who hear the music opening within, please speak up," said Gudnadottir. "We need to hear your voices."

Awards were spread around to all of the best-picture nominees, with the lone exception being Scorsese's 10-time nominee "The Irishman." When Bong mentioned his admiration of Scorsese, an impromptu tribute broke out, with the Dolby Theatre giving Scorsese a standing ovation. The car racing throwback "Ford v Ferrari" won both editing and sound editing. Gerwig's Louisa May Alcott adaptation "Little Women" won for Jacqueline Durran's costume design. "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" won for Barbara Ling's production design.

Netflix didn't go home empty handed. Aside from Dern's win for "Marriage Story," the streamer's "American Factory" won best documentary. The film is the first release from Barack and Michelle Obama's Higher Ground Productions.

Pixar extended its domination of the best animated film category, winning for "Toy Story 4." It's the 10th Pixar film to win the award and second "Toy Story" film to do so, following the previous 2010 installment.

It was an early award for the Walt Disney Co. which despite amassing a record \$13 billion in worldwide box office last year and owning the network the Oscars are broadcast on, played a minor role in the ceremony. The bulk of its awards came from 20th Century Fox ("Ford v Ferrari") and Fox Searchlight ("Jojo Rabbit"), both of which the company took control of after its \$71.3 billion acquisition of 21st Century Fox last year.

Disney's ABC, which is broadcasting the show live, hoped a widely watched field of nominees—including the \$1 billion-grossing "Joker"—will help viewership. Last year's show garnered 29.6 million viewers, a 12% uptick.

NEW YORK (AP)—The Oscars closed the awards season in style, with statement necklaces and classic gowns, traditional tuxedos and some young rule-breakers.

A look at fashion highlights from Hollywood's big night Sunday:

THE GOWNS

Scarlett Johansson, Renee Zellweger, Charlize Theron, Cynthia Erivo and Regina King served up standout looks.

King's pale pink Versace with just the right amount of silver embellishment was a flawless fit. Johansson's Champagne-hued Oscar de la Renta was a strapless wonder with strand details at the top. Theron's black Dior Haute Couture offered one shoulder up and one down, along with a high side slit. Erivo shut it down in a white custom Atelier Versace one-shoulder bustier gown. Zellweger didn't disappoint in a white symmetrical body hugger from Armani with one long sleeve.

"Regina King and Cynthia Erivo really did the ballgown right," said Justine Carreon, senior market editor for Elle.com. "Cynthia Erivo had those kind of modern paniers on the hips. Regina had a pink princess moment, but it still had a very modern neckline."

Nobody took any big risks, she said, though there were some statements made.

Natalie Portman used her Maria Grazia Chiuri's embroidered cape to showcase the names of female directors snubbed by the Academy stitched into the fabric. Kaitlyn Dever wore a sustainable Louis Vuitton look in crimson. Waad al-Kateab, co-director of the documentary "For Sama," used her gown for some political messaging in Arabic.

Refinery29.com's director

of fashion and culture, Gabrielle Korn, called Portman's moment "such a strong statement and such an important reminder that fashion can speak volumes."

Andrea Lavinthal, style and beauty director of People, was a fan of Zellweger's Armani Prive gown.

"She looked so elegant. People are always commenting that she sticks to a column silhouette but when you see something like that on her and how stunning it looks, I think you understand why it's her signature."

Young Hollywood didn't disappoint.

Janelle Monae stunned in silver Ralph Lauren with a hood, long sleeves and about 170,000 Swarovski crystals. Florence Pugh wore a tiered gown in welcome green from Louis Vuitton. Billie Eilish donned fuzzy, oversize Chanel jackets and pants to go with her bright green and black hair. Timothée Chalamet detoured from a slew of classic black tuxedos in a custom Prada navy gabardine jacket with satin racing stripes and matching trousers.

"She always brings such drama to the carpet in such an elegant way," E! style correspondent Zanna Roberts Rassi said of Monae's look. Monae, along with Eilish and Billy Porter (in a golden feather top and orange ball skirt), show trends aren't everything. The trend was to be yourself."

"It's less about trends. It's more about showing who they really are," she said.

Carreon, senior market editor for Elle.com, agreed.

"Billie Eilish and Billy Porter tend to just stick to their guns. When it comes to fashion, they don't let themselves be confined to any box," she

said. "It's true that Eilish loves a logo, but that's true of her generation, from Gucci to Louis Vuitton."

Of Monet, Vanity Fair.com's associate editor Erin Vanderhoof said: "For the last decade, the musician and actor has proven that she's never afraid to wear something completely original, and it's been inspiring to see her hang on to that experimentation as she has blossomed from an R&B singer into full-blown movie star."

Lavinthal adored Johansson's bombshell look.

"She looked so outrageous in that dress. She's glowing. She has looked outrageous all awards season. I think it's love. I think love is her accessory. She really looks radiant and sexy."

Johansson is engaged to Colin Jost from "Saturday Night Live."

As for Erivo, who was nominated twice with no wins Sunday, fashion has helped propel her this awards season.

"If you didn't know her name before awards season, you know it now thanks in part to the incredible fashion choices she and her stylist, Jason Bolden, have been making. She looked so happy. You can see she feels comfortable and good, and that really comes through in these dramatic dresses she's been wearing, and the enormous jewels. She doesn't let these gowns wear her, which is incredible considering she's so petite," Lavinthal said of the 5-foot-1 Erivo.

Vintage represented, but just a tad.

Margot Robbie hit the carpet in Chanel from the brand's spring 1994 haute couture collection. It was a black fitted bustier gown with detached sleeves that practically touched

A breakdown of the gowns, bling and beauty from the

OSCARS.

the ground. A pearl pendant was front and center.

THE BLING

There was an abundance of statement necklaces on women (Mindy Kaling, Julia Louis-Dreyfus, Zazie Beetz), but there was also a show of "gent's jewelry," said Claibourne Poindexter, associate jewelry specialist for Christie's auction house.

From Porter in multiple bracelets and rings from Swarovski to men bringing back the lapel brooch (Chalamet's vintage Cartier), "there is no doubt that men are embracing jewels for the first time in a long time," he said.

Among other favorites: Anthony Ramos in a long necklace and lapel brooch worn with a white suit.

As for the women, Greta Gerwig wore diamonds and emerald from Bulgari, as did Beetz. Theron wore a diamond drop necklace by Tiffany & Co. weighing in at more than 20 carats. Louis-Dreyfus wore more than 60 carats set in platinum from Harry Winston. Vintage represented in a small way, thanks to Rebel Wilson's gold and diamond double row necklace by Pomellato to Chalamet's 1950s ruby and diamond clip, Poindexter said.

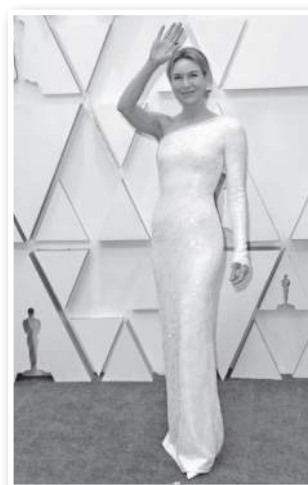
"Over the last several years we've seen a consistent increase

in gentlemen who wear jewels as a great way to diversify their style on what is arguably a more difficult wardrobe to show individuality in," he said.

Gerwig's emerald beads and diamonds has her "following in the footsteps of many powerful women in film," Poindexter said. "From Elizabeth Taylor in her own Bulgari emerald and diamond jewels purchased on a visit to the Bulgari boutique with Richard Burton to Monica Vitti posing for Karen Radkai in a full suite of oval shaped emerald and diamond jewelry in 1963, Bulgari has had a long reputation of being a favorite among the film and jet set," Poindexter said.



Greta Gerwig arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Renee Zellweger arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Joaquin Phoenix, winner of the award for best performance by an actor in a leading role for "Joker," poses in the press room at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Charlize Theron arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Billy Porter arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Bong Joon-ho arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Brad Pitt, winner of the award for best performance by an actor in a supporting role for "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," poses in the press room at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Janelle Monae arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



Regina King arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.

Scarlett Johansson arrives at the Oscars on Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles.



'Birds of Prey' flies low on Oscars weekend with tepid debut

LOS ANGELES (AP)—“Birds of Prey,” the DC Comics’ Harley Quinn spinoff, made a tepid debut in theaters over the weekend, opening in No. 1 but below expectations with \$33.3 million domestically, according to studio estimates Sunday.

“Birds of Prey (and the Fantabulous Emancipation of One Harley Quinn),” an R-rated Warner Bros. release, arrived in theaters while its

star—Margot Robbie—is nominated for an Academy Award for her performance in “Bombshell” and the previous DC film, the \$1 billion-grossing “Joker,” is up for a leading 11 Oscars.

But despite those lead-ins, “Birds of Prey” came in for a rocky landing. It had been expected to open around \$50 million. It fared similarly overseas, grossing an estimated \$48 million from 78 inter-



AP
This image released by Warner Bros. Pictures shows, from left, Rosie Perez, Mary Elizabeth Winstead, Margot Robbie, Ella Jay Basco and Jurnee Smollett-Bell in a scene from “Birds of Prey.”

Mexican art critic shatters contemporary piece at art fair

MEXICO CITY (AP)—An art critic has destroyed a contemporary piece at Mexico’s premiere art fair, setting off a spirited debate about what constitutes art.

Critic Avelina Léser said she accidentally shattered the installation Saturday at the Zona Maco art fair in Mexico City when she placed an empty soda can near it to express her disdain for the piece: a sheet of glass with a stone, soccer ball and other random objects suspended inside.

The display was by Mexican artist Gabriel Rico, who contrasts objects made by humans, such as tennis balls, with objects found in nature, such as feathers and rocks.

“It was like the work heard my comment and felt what I thought of it,” Léser said in a video statement for Milenio, a Mexican media group that publishes her columns. “The work shattered into pieces and collapsed and fell on the floor.”

Léser said she was then told the piece was valued at \$20,000.

Accident or not, the gal-

lery displaying the work criticized Léser’s behavior as unprofessional.

“Léser coming too close to the work to place a soda can on it and take a picture as criticism without a doubt caused the destruction,” OMR gallery said in a statement via Instagram.

The gallery said the critic’s behavior showed an “enormous lack of professionalism and respect.”

OMR said Rico’s work is highly sought by collectors and art institutions at the moment.

Alfonso Miranda, director of the Soumaya art museum in Mexico, described the incident via Twitter as a “tragedy.”

Others took to social media to applaud the destruction as a performance piece, and to pan the sale of art that consists of used and found objects.

Léser said she suggested the gallery leave the piece shattered, to show its evolution. When they rejected that idea, she said she offered to repair it.

The gallery said it would get in touch with the artist before announcing next steps.

national markets.

Warner Bros. said the coronavirus impacted sales in Asia, though in South Korea, where “Birds of Prey” made \$1.9 million, it came in second to a local release. “Birds of Prey” doesn’t have a China release scheduled, and “Suicide Squad” never opened there. Cinemas in the country, the world’s second largest movie market, have shut down amid the coronavirus outbreak.

“Birds of Prey,” the week’s lone new wide release, cost approximately \$100 million to make. Cathy Yan directs the “Suicide Squad” spinoff, which Robbie also produced. Robbie stars as Quinn, the crazed criminal who after

splitting with Joker is a solo vigilante. Reviews were mostly favorable, with an 80% fresh rating on Rotten Tomatoes. Audiences gave it a B-plus CinemaScore.

After three weeks atop the box office, Sony Picture’s “Bad Boys for Life” dropped to second with \$12 million in its fourth weekend. The action comedy, which reunites Will Smith and Martin Lawrence, has grossed \$336 million worldwide.

Though analysts are forecasting a down year for Hollywood at the box office, the success of “Bad Boys for Life” has helped drive the year’s ticket sales to an almost 10% uptick over the first five weeks of 2019, according to

data firm Comscore.

Ahead of the Academy Awards, several nominees padded their ticket-sales totals. Universal’s “1917,” the Sam Mendes-directed World War I film, took in another \$9 million in its seventh weekend, good for third place. The film, a favorite for Sunday night, has grossed \$132.5 million domestically and \$287.4 million globally.

Rian Johnson’s “Knives Out,” nominated for best screenplay, added \$2.4 million, bringing its North American total to \$158.9 million. Lionsgate earlier this week confirmed a sequel to the acclaimed whodunit.

Greta Gerwig’s “Little Women,”

May Alcott adaptation “Little Women,” up for six Oscars including best picture, also ranked in the top 10 with \$2.3 million. Its seven-week domestic total is \$102.7 million. That gives the best-picture category five \$100 million-grossing movies, including “1917,” “Joker,” “Ford v Ferrari” and “Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood.” (“Parasite” has also surpassed \$100 million.) Netflix hasn’t reported box-office data for its two best-picture contenders, “The Irishman” and “Marriage Story.”

Holdovers “Doolittle” (\$6.7 million in its fourth weekend) and “Jumanji: The Next Level” (\$5.5 million) rounded out the top five.

Estimated ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theaters, according to Comscore.

1. “Birds of Prey,” \$33.3 million (\$48 million international).
2. “Bad Boys for Life,” \$12 million.
3. “1917,” \$9 million.
4. “Doolittle,” \$6.7 million.
5. “Jumanji: The Next Level,” \$5.5 million.
6. “The Gentlemen,” \$4.2 million.
7. “Gretel & Hansel,” \$3.5 million.
8. “Knives Out,” \$2.4 million.
9. “Little Women,” \$2.3 million.
10. “Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker,” \$2.2 million.

Brother’s hair-trigger temper makes get-togethers tense

DEAR ABBY: A year ago, my brother “Leon” had a nervous breakdown at work due to a co-worker constantly harassing him. He’s currently under the care of a therapist through his workplace and has not worked for a year.

Recently, at a family get-together, I asked him a question about his current situation. He became angry and very emotional. He accused me of “not listening” and went through the process of re-describing in detail how the co-worker harassed him. He then became confrontational, as if I were on trial. His adult daughter kept her head down, until she finally told her father that I only asked him the question because I loved him and was concerned for him. My niece and her sister both tried to de-escalate the situation, but were unsuccessful.

After he was done with his tirade, he proceeded to harass and belittle ME! At that point, I got up and told my husband privately that I wanted to leave, which we did. This isn’t the first time my brother has behaved this way at a family get-together. He acted out toward family members long before the incident at his workplace.

I enjoy being with my family, but Leon has made it unpleasant for me, and I don’t like how I must walk on eggshells around him to prevent a confrontation. How do I handle this in the future and still have fun with my family?

LINE OF FIRE IN OHIO

DEAR LINE OF FIRE: It appears your brother is not progressing well with his therapy, which is sad not only for him but also anyone who has to interact with him. Because you are no longer willing to tolerate his abuse, a logical answer would be to see your relatives in situations where he isn’t included. Consider doing some entertaining on your own, because in that way, you can control the guest list.

DEAR ABBY: I was adopted at birth. About 30 years ago, I found my birth mother, but our relationship is intermittent and distant. She only recently gave me a name of my biological father. Through DNA testing I have discovered that the name she gave me was incorrect and who he actually was. The confirmation is rock solid with half-sisters and several first cousins located.

My birth mother is 90 now. Should I tell her what I have found out or let it go? All of the direct players in this, except her, have passed on.

TRUTH-TELLER IN TEXAS

DEAR TRUTH-TELLER: How mentally “with it” is your 90-year-old mother? If she’s in the early stages of dementia, what have you to gain by telling her? If she’s sharp as a tack, one has to wonder why she would try to obscure

DEAR ABBY

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE



Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

your bio-father’s identity. Was she attempting to protect herself, him or you? Or was she unsure of his identity because she had been raped or was seeing more than one man? These are questions I can’t answer for you.

It shouldn’t create a bombshell if you approach the subject by telling her you have uncovered some information about your biological relatives. If she is interested, tell her everything. If not, let it be.

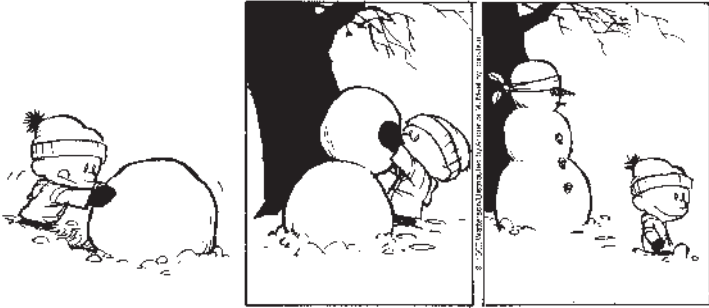
To receive a collection of Abby’s most memorable – and most frequently requested – poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for \$8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby – Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

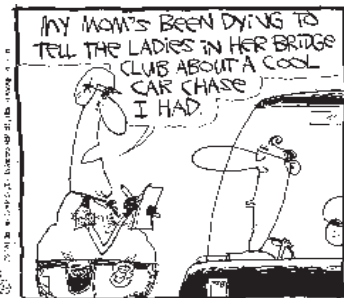
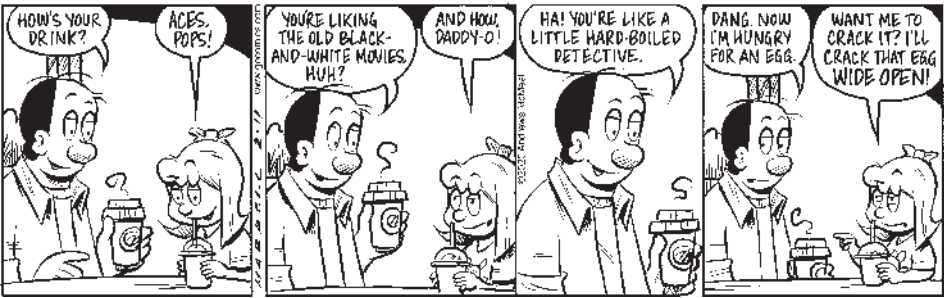
Garfield® By Jim Davis



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By Bryan Basset

The Duplex By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Group of actors

5 "The X-Files" org.

8 Crib cry

12 Regarding

13 Cyclades island

14 Exam format

15 Quail's cousin

17 Croupier's tool

18 Drunkard

19 Chapeau holder

21 Like some goals

24 Rum cake

25 With skill

26 Peevish

30 Extinct

31 Braid of hair

32 Scot's denial

33 Fondness for

35 "Mad Money" network

36 Reply to "Shall we?"

37 Audacious

38 Eccentric

41 Menagerie

42 Location

43 Nice

48 Will of "The Waltons"

49 Ms. Thurman

50 Party cheese

51 Piercing tools

52 NBC weekend show

53 Harvard rival

2 Bat wood

3 Sault — Marie

4 Warm and cozy

5 Edict

6 "— voyage!"

7 "Are we done here?"

8 Human

9 Speedy

10 Shark

11 TV's

16 Tofu

20 Border on

21 Genie's home

22 Reed instrument

23 Custard recipe

24 Hot dog side dish

26 Duck-billed critter

27 "Blessings" author

28 Apprehends

29 Georgia or Cal

31 "That was close!"

34 Exonerates

35 Partner of Stills and Nash

37 Large snake

38 Long tale

39 Ship's staff

40 Stagger

41 Gusto

44 Run after K

45 Palindromic constellation

46 Zilch

47 Golf prop

Solution time: 22 mins.

Yesterdays answer 2-11

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Taylor Lautner, 28; Kelly Rowland, 39; Jennifer Aniston, 51; Sheryl Crow, 58.

Happy Birthday: Do your best, and you'll get the most in return. Added discipline will help you reach the goals you set this year. Fitness, organization and putting everything you want to keep in your life in its proper place will help you prepare for new beginnings. Look inward, and you'll discover what it is you can do to improve emotionally, physically and spiritually. Your numbers are 4, 12, 20, 26, 31, 35, 48.

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Stay on top of your game. Don't overreact. Do more and complain less, and accomplish what you set out to do. Once you establish your position and what you want, it will be easy to manipulate situations to benefit you. ***

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Get out, meet new people and try things you've never done. You'll benefit from the interactions you have with established individuals. A new outlook will lead to greater confidence. Elders, children or peers will offer exciting options. *****

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): It's what you do that counts. If you leave a good impression, you will prosper. Take the initiative, add extra detail and do your best to stand out. Adopting a proactive attitude, taking action and finishing what you start will bring positive results. **

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Start talking, and you'll build an audience. There is plenty to gain from the people you encounter and the partnerships you develop. Change can

be useful and benefit you if you stop complaining and start making adjustments. ****

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Your charm will entertain whoever you encounter. A job done well will impress onlookers; however, don't think you will reap the rewards without continued effort. The best way to secure your position is with consistency and superior work ethic. ***

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Emotional matters will surface. Be prepared to deal with whatever pops up, and move on. Use any opportunity to demonstrate how you feel and what you want to happen, and you will get the help you need to allow you to excel. ***

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Be willing to give and to take. Travel, even if it's only a short distance. A new hobby or creative project, or getting out with friends will lead to new beginnings. The options that keep you active will bring the best results. ***

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Do something unique, and you will find it enlightening. You can make a difference at home if you start renovations, redecorate or make a physical move that will eliminate problems that are holding you back. Act on your gut feelings. ****

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): It will be up to you to get things underway. Plan an adventure, visit an exotic destination or open your heart to someone you want to get to know better. Let your imagination flow and your free spirit dictate your destiny. **

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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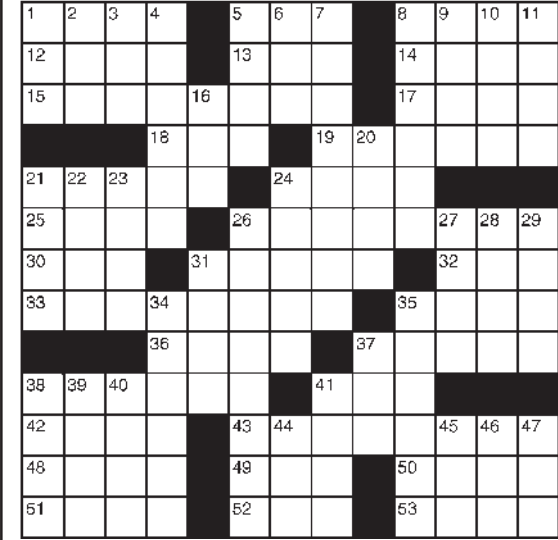
CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Make a move, put your finances in order and implement the professional, financial and personal changes you want to happen. Tackling home improvement projects or changing your living arrangements is encouraged. A lifestyle change will improve emotional and physical health. *****

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Focus on what you believe in, and make a change that will strengthen your relationship with someone special. Stop beating yourself up, and start doing something that puts a smile on your face. Live in the moment, and do things your way. ***

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Take on a project if it will help you seal a deal or advance. Don't leave anything undone or in someone else's hands. Be responsible, share your ideas and form alliances, and you will get ahead. Change is necessary, so forge ahead. ***

Birthday Baby: You are intelligent, innovative and thoughtful. You are intuitive and creative.

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STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call 1-900-226-5955! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku By Dave Green

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterdays Answer

Difficulty Level ★★

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WONDERWORD By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

T. BOONE PICKENS (1928-2019) Solution: 9 letters

W O I L M A N A T U R A L S S
I P H A R O B E D T O N I O D
S T O V A L L E A H C I M L R
D N I W F H M E T F L U G A A
O D D M E I R R D R E T I R W
M L O A T R A A G L L E F E A
E Y N P A U L S O N I N O C U
N N A C T L W R L S Z I K N M
I N T S A I T R N A A A L A U
E O I S F E A E Y M B M A N I
L B O T P C K G G O E D H I D
E R N A L C A N R H T L O F A
D I S E I S A X E T H O M E T
A E A P L A N S N D T R A M S
M N I A C A D L E N O O C Y T

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Awards, Carl, Carr, Clean, Dallas, Deborah, Donations, Elizabeth, Energy, Farm, Finance, Gas, Gulf, Home, Lynn O'Brien, Madeleine, Mesa Petroleum, Michael, Natural, Nelda Cain, Oilman, Oklahoma, Old Main, Pam, Paulson, Pickens, Plans, Power, Smart, Solar, Stadium, Stovall, Stuart, Swift, Texas, Thomas, Time, Toni, Tycoon, Wind, Wisdom, Writer

Yesterdays Answer: Biocapacity

To purchase THE COLLECTED WONDERWORD, Volumes 37 through 51, order online at www.WonderWordBooks.com.

CLASSIFIED ADS



**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT**

INVITATION TO BID
ITB NO.: ITB20-DPW-045

SUBMISSION DATE: FEBRUARY 28, 2020 TIME: 09:30 A.M.

**“OFFICE SPACE RENTAL
FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS”**

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR OF PROCUREMENT & SUPPLY, LOCATED AT THE FORMER EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE, ASCENSION DRIVE, BUILDING NO. 1301, CAPITOL HILL, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE LESSOR MUST COMPLY WITH THE CNMI PUBLIC LAW 15-23, ARTICLE 5, SECTION 8652 (A-D)

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTION 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

THE CNMI GOVERNMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, OR PORTIONS THEREOF, AND WAIVE IMMATERIAL DEFECTS IF TO DO SO WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE CNMI GOVERNMENT.

/S/ JAMES A. ADA
SECRETARY OF DPW

/S/ FRANCISCO C. AGUON
ACTING DIRECTOR, P&S



**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Commonwealth Judiciary**
Guma' Hustisia, Iimwal Aweewe, House of Justice
P.O. Box 502165, Saipan MP 96950
Telephone (670) 236-9770 Facsimile (670)236-9797

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
RFP20-JUDICIARY-02**

SUBMISSION DATE: February 26, 2020 TIME: 3:00 P.M.

“WINDOW REPAIR”

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE OBTAINED BY VISITING THE CASHIER WINDOW, WINDOW #1, LOCATED AT THE FRONT GUMA HUSTISIA / IIMWAL AWEWE / HOUSE OF JUSTICE, SUSUPE, SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE CNMI PROCUREMENT REGULATIONS, NMIAC SECTIONS 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 PROHIBITING GRATUITIES, KICKBACKS AND CONTINGENT FEES SHALL APPLY.

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/s/ ALEXANDRO C. CASTRO
CHIEF JUSTICE

/s/ JOHN T. VILLAGOMEZ
JUDICIARY PROCUREMENT OFFICER

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**INVITATION FOR BIDS
ITB20-GOV-057**

**FEMA DR-4235-MP 404 HMGP Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Water System Mitigation Project at Site 5 – As-Matuus, Saipan**

Governor Ralph DLG. Torres and Lieutenant Arnold I. Palacios, through the Governor's Authorized Representative (GAR), (collectively, "Commonwealth") and on behalf of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC) are soliciting sealed bids for the supply, construction and implementation of the CUC Water System Mitigation Project located at Site 5 in As-Matuus, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available and may be obtained at Pacific Quick Print & Post, in Garapan, Saipan beginning **February 11, 2020 for \$75.00** (non-refundable), payable to Pacific Quick Print & Post. **All interested bidders are required to include an Insurer Certification Clearance (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC should be obtained at the Department of Commerce, Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.**

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, as revised through May 24, 2001 and with the Northern Mariana Islands Administrative Code (NMIAC) §70-30.3-725 Gratuities and Kickbacks and §70.30.3-730 Prohibition Against Contingent Fees. All wage rates for employees performing the work, labor and services on this project shall be paid at the current U.S. prevailing wage rates established for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

There will be a pre-bid conference for this project on **Wednesday, February 26, 2020 10:00 am ChST** at the Governor's Conference in Capitol Hill, Saipan. Questions concerning this project shall be directed to Ms. Leona Deleon Guerrero in writing by e-mail to ldlguerrero@omb.gov.mp or fax to (670) 664-2408 on or before **Wednesday, March 4, 2020**. All responses to inquiries will be shared with all prospective bidders.

Sealed bids must be marked **ITB20-GOV-057 Supply, Construction and Implementation of the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation Water System Mitigation Project at Site 5 in As-Matuus, Saipan**. For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST March 18, 2020**. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to Bid. Notices of Intent to Bid must be received by the Director of Procurement & Supply no later than **10:00 a.m. ChST March 18, 2020** and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to a.magofna@dof.gov.mp. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than **March 18, 2020** and mailed to the **Director of Procurement and Supply at P.O. BOX 510008 C.K., Saipan MP, 96950** and the bid documents must be received no later than **March 27, 2020**. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly open and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply located at the former Emergency Management Office, Building No. 1301, Ascension Drive, Capitol Hill on Saipan at **10:00 a.m. ChST, March 30, 2020**. However, if no notices of intent to bid are received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be open at **10:00 a.m. ChST, March 18, 2020**.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen percent (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. Bid security shall be on a bid bond, in cash, by certified check, cashier's check or other form acceptable to the government. A surety company shall hold the certificate of authority from the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury as an acceptable surety or other surety acceptable to the Attorney General. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check: "Credit Account No. 44660". If a bid bond is submitted it must be accompanied by an Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC).

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 70-30.3-245. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than \$25,000.00.

Prior to the execution of the contract, the selected contractor shall submit:

- A current license from the bonding company showing that it has authority to issue bond in the CNMI, and
- A certification from the bonding company that the unencumbered value of its assets (exclusive of all outstanding commitments on other bond obligations) exceeds the penal amount of each bond.

A contractor submitting an unacceptable payment or performance bond may be permitted a reasonable time, as determined by the P&S Director, to substitute an acceptable bond prior to executing a contract. Acceptable assets are only:

- Cash
- US Government Securities
- Stocks and Bonds traded on US Security Exchange
- Real Property owned in fee simple in US; and
- Irrevocable Letters of Credit

Performance time for completion of this project is 180 Calendar Days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. The daily amount of liquidated damages shall be \$500.00/day.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not affect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

BREACH OF ETHICAL STANDARDS
(To be part of Solicitation for quotes, ITBs and RFPs)

- Gratuities.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any person to offer, give or agree to give any employee or former employee, or for any employee or former employee to solicit, demand, accept or agree to accept from another person, a gratuity or an offer of employment in connection with any decision, approval, disapproval, recommendation, preparation of any part of a program requirement or a purchase request, influencing the content of any specification or procurement standard, rendering of advice, investigation, auditing or in any other advisory capacity in any proceeding or application, request for ruling, determination, claim or controversy, or other particular matter, pertaining to any program requirement or a contract or subcontract or to any solicitation or proposal therefor. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(a).
- Kickbacks.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for any payment, gratuity or offer of employment to be made by or on behalf of a subcontractor under a contract to the prime contractor or higher tier subcontractor or any person associated therewith as an inducement for the award of subcontractor or order. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-725(b).
- Contingent Fees.** It shall be a breach of ethical standards for a person to be retained, or to retain a person, to solicit or secure government contracts upon an agreement or understanding for a commission, percentage, brokerage or contingent fee, except for retention of bona fide employees or bona fide established commercial selling agencies for the purpose of securing business. NMIAC Section 70-30.3-730.

The government reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, in whole or in part, and to waive any imperfection in a proposal if in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. All proposals shall become the property of the CNMI government.

Virginia C. Villagomez
Governor's Authorized Representative

Francisco C. Aguon, Acting Director
CNMI Procurement & Supply

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REFUNDS

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Morant posts 1st triple-double as Grizzlies drop Wizards



WASHINGTON (AP)—The Memphis Grizzlies believe their resilience helps them overcome rough shooting nights like Sunday.

Having Ja Morant helps, too.

Morant had 27 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for his first career triple-double, and the Grizzlies shook off their 3-point woes in a 106-99 victory over the Washington Wizards.

Memphis remained eighth in the Western Conference while improving to 27-26. That's one victory more than some sportsbooks projected the Grizzlies to earn all season.

"I feel like we all here just have a chip on our shoulder," said Morant, who is now those same sportsbooks' favorite in the NBA Rookie of the Year race. "Like I said before, they had us picked to win 26 games this year. That's a chip right there, and we just passed that tonight. But the chip won't leave."

Morant scored 10 of his points in the fourth quarter for Memphis, which closed the game on a 22-8 run after trailing for most of the second half.

Kyle Anderson added 16 points and Jaren Jackson Jr. had 14 to go with 11 rebounds for the Grizzlies, who won despite shooting 5 of 32 from beyond the arc.

Jonas Valanciunas had 18 rebounds, part of a 62-50 edge the visitors held on the boards.

"It took some gutsy stuff out there," Memphis coach Taylor Jenkins said. "This is, I like to think, kind of a defining moment for our guys having to kind of fight through one of the toughest offensive nights for us."

Bradley Beal scored 26 points for Washington, which led by as many as 12 early but shot 4 of 26 in the fourth quarter.

Rui Hachimura had 12 points and 11 assists as the Wizards dropped three games behind Orlando for the final playoff spot in the East.

Moritz Wagner had 19 points off the bench, while Davis Bertans added 15 on a night Washington shot nearly as bad as Memphis beyond the arc (7 of 33) and worse overall (34 of 101).

"Sometimes we come down and we can't get stops, and we can't make shots either," Beal said afterward. "So it's like, something's got to give."

Morant was the instigator throughout the Grizzlies' late run. He found Anderson underneath for a layup to tie it at 93 with 5:33 remaining before hitting two free throws to give Memphis its first lead of the half 26 seconds later.

Clarke's 3-pointer on his only attempt behind the arc stretched the lead to five be-



fore Morant found Anderson inside again to make it 102-95.

Morant's 3 from the right elbow with made it 105-96 with 44 seconds remaining, sending much of the Washington crowd to the exits.

"That guy is young, but he plays like a five-year All-Star," Wizards coach Scott Brooks said of Morant. "He just controls the game. ... He's a problem."

Trail Blazers 115, Heat 109

In Portland, Ore., Andre Iguodala fell short in his first chance to get a win with the Miami Heat.

His next one will come against his former team. Damian Lillard had 33 points and eight assists, Gary Trent Jr. scored 22 points and the Portland Trail Blazers beat Miami 115-109 on Sunday night.

Iguodala had two points in his first game since the NBA Finals.

"It felt good tonight," Iguodala said. "I wanted to get a feel for where I was at. Honestly, I haven't even played a pickup game or anything since the finals. I was trying to get a feel for where my mind was. Overall, I felt really good out there."

For Iguodala and the Heat, the next game will be at Golden State, where he was a member of three championship teams and the MVP of the 2015 NBA Finals.

"I've played a lot of basketball games in my career, so the emotional highs and lows, I don't have anymore," Iguodala said of returning to play his former team. "For this

team, more importantly, we want to win. This road trip is tough with a lot of guys down. We've got new bodies and us getting a win is more important than how I feel."

Hassan Whiteside had 11 points and 17 rebounds against his former team, including a pair of free throws with 11.5 seconds left that gave Portland a seven-point lead.

Clippers 133, Cavaliers 92

In Cleveland, the presence of Andre Drummond began the night with optimism for the Cleveland Cavaliers.

That positive feeling was quickly dashed by a 133-92 loss Sunday to the Los Angeles Clippers, the Cavaliers' worst home defeat in franchise history.

"Tonight was pretty ugly, so show 'em your worst first and you only can go up from there," Kevin Love said.

Drummond started in his first game with Cleveland after being acquired from Detroit at the trade deadline. He scored 19 points, had 14 rebounds and even hit a pair of 3-pointers in 29 minutes.

Drummond's numbers weren't nearly enough as the Clippers led wire-to-wire without star forward Kawhi Leonard. Cleveland's previous worst was a 39-point loss to Chicago in 2012.

Hawks 140, Knicks 135

In Atlanta, Trae Young was disappointed that the Atlanta Hawks let New York rally in regulation and take a big lead

in the first overtime, so he repeatedly took the ball and dared the Knicks to foul him.

"When you had that lead late in the game and you feel like we should've won in regulation, and then they send it to overtime, it kills momentum," Young said. "That kind of took a lot of energy out of us, but we found a way to keep battling, keep making shots and getting stops on the defensive end."

Young had 48 points and 13 assists, John Collins added 32 points and 16 rebounds, and the Hawks beat the New York 140-135 in two overtimes on Sunday night.

It was the ninth time Young has scored at least 40, second-most in the NBA this season. The first-time All-Star hit all 16 of his free throw attempts and knocked down six 3-pointers.

Julius Randle finished with 35 points and 18 rebounds, and Reggie Bullock scored 21 points for New York, which had its four-game winning streak snapped. Playing their third game in four nights, the Knicks dropped to 17-37 after trailing by 16 in the fourth. They led by eight in the first overtime before letting the Hawks back in it.

Jazz 114, Rockets 113

In Houston, Jazz coach Quin Snyder kept telling Bojan Bogdanovic to keep playing despite his shooting struggles on Sunday night.

Bogdanovic ended up hitting the biggest shot of the game.

Bogdanovic's 3-pointer as time expired gave Utah a 114-

113 victory over the Houston Rockets.

"The play was designed for me to shoot a 3," Bogdanovic said. "It's big-time from their part to have that trust and confidence in me to make that shot after the game that I had."

Bogdanovic finished with eight points on 2-of-7 shooting.

"You just play him, let him play," Snyder said. "He's such a competitor, and I tell him to keep playing. If he needs to hear that, he knows how much I trust him."

Jordan Clarkson scored 30 points and Donovan Mitchell finished with 24 points, six assists and five rebounds for the Jazz, who won their second straight after a five-game losing streak.

Mike Conley added 20 points, six assists and five rebounds for the Jazz. Rudy Gobert had 12 points and 15 rebounds. The Jazz shot 49%, including 15 of 38 on 3-pointers.

Celtics 112, Thunder 111

In Oklahoma City, With most of their lead gone, the Boston Celtics needed someone to make a stop in the final seconds.

As usual, Marcus Smart took it upon himself.

Smart stole the ball from Oklahoma City's Shai Gilgeous-Alexander with 5.8 seconds left helping the Celtics hold on for a 112-111 victory over the Thunder on Sunday.

"I didn't even want to give them an attempt to even get a shot up and a chance to tie the game or come close to it," Smart said.

Kemba Walker scored 27

Memphis Grizzlies guard Ja Morant (12) goes to the basket next to Washington Wizards forward Moritz Wagner, left, during the first half of an NBA basketball game, Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, in Washington.

points and Jayson Tatum had 26 for the Celtics, who won their seventh straight.

"Good, tough teams," Celtics coach Brad Stevens said. "A lot of smart basketball and then we almost gave it away at the end. But, you know, up to that point I think we played really hard and really well."

Jaylen Brown finished with 17 points for the Celtics, who made 16 3-pointers. One of them, by Smart with 8:19 remaining, gave Boston the lead for good.

Danilo Gallinari and Gilgeous-Alexander each had 24 points for the Thunder, while point guards Chris Paul and Dennis Schroder finished with 22 apiece. Oklahoma City had its four-game winning streak snapped.

76ers 118, Bulls 111

In Philadelphia, the 76ers made a trade for a pair of outside shooters to help make a deep run in the playoffs. Turns out, the player they needed might have been there the whole time.

Furkan Korkmaz topped 30 points for the second straight contest with 31, Joel Embiid had 28 points and 12 rebounds and Philadelphia beat the Chicago Bulls 118-111 on Sunday night to improve their NBA-best home record to 24-2.

Korkmaz made 12 of 17 field goals, going 6 of 11 on 3-pointers. He stayed hot after netting a career-high 34 points in Friday's 119-107 home win over Memphis in which he drained 13 of 17 shot and was 7 of 9 on 3-pointers.

"I'm just trying to play my best basketball, and my strongest part of my game is shooting," he said.

The 76ers acquired wings Glenn Robinson III and Alec Burks at the trade deadline. Although it appears otherwise, Korkmaz says it's just a coincidence that he's had the best two games of his career on back-to-back nights since the trade.

"It's not really about that," he said. "It's just trying to help the team on the court. I'm trying to put the team first. I'm really happy I'm helping my teammates."

Ben Simmons added 19 points, 10 assists and 10 rebounds for the 76ers.

Zach LaVine scored 32 points and Luke Kornet added 25 for the short-handed Bulls, who have lost five straight.

Source: Dodgers, Twins, Sox divvy Betts deal into 2 swaps



MINNEAPOLIS (AP)—
Moving

Mookie Betts out of Boston proved to be quite the task for the cost-cutting Red Sox.

The trade wound up taking all week — and being divvied into two different deals.

The Minnesota Twins agreed Sunday to send bullpen prospect Brusdar Graterol to the Los Angeles Dodgers for starting pitcher Kenta Maeda, according to a person with direct knowledge of the deal, five days after the initial Betts-headlined trade with the Red Sox was held up.

The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the deals had not yet been announced. The Twins also agreed to send one of their draft picks in the competitive balance round this summer—67th overall—and a minor leaguer to the Dodgers for \$10 million and a minor leaguer to settle their portion of the trade.

Graterol was first headed for the Red Sox as part of a three-team swap agreed to



In this Aug. 10, 2019, file photo, Boston Red Sox's Mookie Betts hits an RBI-double during the sixth inning of a baseball game against the Los Angeles Angels in Boston. Betts has agreed to a \$27 million contract with the Red Sox. It is the largest one-year salary for an arbitration-eligible player. AP

MLB BRIEFS

Phillies to retire Halladay's 34 on perfect game anniversary

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Philadelphia Phillies will retire the late Hall of Fame pitcher Roy Halladay's No. 34 this season. The Phillies will pay tribute to Halladay on May 29, 2020, the 10th anniversary of his perfect game against the Marlins. It was the 20th perfect game in MLB history. Halladay was 40 when he was killed in a plane crash in November 2017. Halladay went 203-105 with a 3.38 ERA and 2,117 strikeouts over his career with Toronto and Philadelphia. He was 3-2 with a 2.37 ERA in five postseason starts, all with the Phillies. He joined Don Larsen (1956) of the New York Yankees as the only pitchers to throw a no-hitter in the postseason. Halladay opened the 2010 NL Division Series with one against the Cincinnati Reds in his first career playoff start. He spent his last four seasons in Philadelphia (2010-13) after 12 seasons with the Blue Jays (1998-2009). Halladay won Cy Young Awards in 2003 with the Blue Jays and in 2010 with the Phillies. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2019.

Hall of Fame voter who snubbed Jeter keeps ballot private

NEW YORK (AP)—The

lone baseball writer who did not vote for Derek Jeter for the Hall of Fame chose to keep his or her ballot private. The Baseball Writers' Association of America released the ballots of 315 Hall voters on Tuesday, and all public ballots included the longtime New York Yankees captain. Jeter was on 396 of 397 ballots in voting announced Jan. 21, elected along with slugger Larry Walker. They will be inducted into the Hall at Cooperstown on July 26 along with catcher Ted Simmons and late players' association head Marvin Miller, who were elected by the modern era committee in November. Mariano Rivera, Jeter's Yankees teammate for five World Series titles, became the first unanimous pick last year when he was on all 425 ballots. The BBWAA has listed public ballots since 2012. The BBWAA voted all Hall ballots should be made public but was overruled by the Hall's board of directors, which instead included an option for each voter to decide whether to release his or her ballot two weeks after the voting announcement. The percentage of public ballots released by the BBWAA was about the same this year (79.3%) as last (79.5%). Ryan Thibodaux's vote tracker lists 332 ballots (83.6%), including six that are anonymous, and all included Jeter.

Tuesday that moved Betts, a four-time All-Star, and starting pitcher David Price to the Dodgers. But the Red Sox, as first reported by The Athletic, raised questions about the health of the hard-throwing Graterol's arm.

The resulting renegotiation was resolved with the Red Sox and Dodgers conducting their own trade involving Betts and Price. The Twins and Dodgers technically now have a separate deal, the person said. The trades, of course, are subject to medical reviews before finalization.

The 21-year-old Graterol, who can touch triple digits on the radar gun with his fastball, missed time last season for Double-A Pensacola with a shoulder injury. The right-

hander recovered in time to make his major league debut with the Twins and pitch in the postseason. The Twins confirmed last month their intent to focus on developing him as a reliever, rather than a starter.

Maeda, who spent his first four major league seasons with the Dodgers after coming over from Japan, likely will slide into the middle of Minnesota's rotation. The right-hander has a 3.87 ERA with 641 strikeouts in 589 career innings, including some late-season and post-season stints in relief.

Maeda made 103 starts over the last four seasons for the Dodgers, but their deep rotation allowed them to put him in the bullpen occasionally, too, and his desire has

been to be a full-time starter. The 31-year-old didn't make his major league debut until age 27 when he came over from the Hiroshima Carp. His \$25 million, eight-year contract was written heavily with incentives that could make it worth as much as \$106.2 million. That's because the Dodgers discovered in his physical at the time "irregularities" in his elbow.

Maeda's deal entitles him to \$6.5 million annually based on starts: \$1 million each for 15 and 20, and \$1.5 million apiece for 25, 30 and 32 starts. He can earn \$3.5 million annually based on innings pitched: \$250,000 for 90 and each additional 10 through 190, and \$750,000 for 200. The deal includes a

\$1 million assignment bonus each time he is traded.

To build their rotation behind ace José Berríos, the Twins re-signed Jake Odorizzi and Michael Pineda earlier this winter and signed free agents Homer Bailey and Rich Hill. Pineda can't pitch until mid-May because of a remaining suspension for a banned diuretic, and Hill won't be ready until mid-summer after elbow surgery. Maeda's arrival, then, will significantly reduce the number of starts the Twins will have to give to more inexperienced candidates. Randy Dobnak, Devin Smeltzer and Lewis Thorpe, who all debuted as rookies last year, will be given the longest looks in spring training.

Morton regrets not trying to stop Astros from stealing signs

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (AP)—Two-time All-Star pitcher Charlie Morton says he regrets not doing anything to try to stop the Houston Astros from illegally stealing signs and relaying the information to their hitters during the team's 2017 World Series championship season.

Morton, now the ace of the Tampa Bay Rays, was in his first season with the Astros that year and was the winning pitcher in Game 7 of both the AL Championship Series and World Series.

He also pitched for Houston in 2018 before signing a two-

year contract in free agency and helping the Rays make the playoffs last season.

"I was aware of the banging. ... Being in the dugout, you could hear it. I don't know when it dawned on me, but you knew it was going on," Morton said Saturday during Tampa Bay's annual Fan Fest event at Tropicana Field.

"Personally, I regret not doing more to stop it. I don't know what that would have entailed," the 36-year-old right-hander said. "I think the actions would have been somewhat extreme to stop it. That's a hypothetical."

While conceding the cheating scandal "negatively impacted the game and people's perception of the game," as well as Houston's lone World Series title, Morton said he doesn't recall specifics about who did what wrong in 2017.

"From a personal standpoint, good people make mistakes. It's as simple as that. I really don't have anything else to say about it. I think mistakes were made and everybody is just trying to move on," Morton said.

"I think it is one of those things where I know those guys," the pitcher continued.

"I went through a lot with those guys, so I feel like I have a little different perspective on who they are as opposed to someone that is just reading that the Astros cheated in 2017."

Houston manager AJ Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow were suspended for a year by MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred after he found illicit use of electronics to steal signs during the Astros' run to the 2017 World Series title and again in the 2018 season. Team owner Jim Crane then fired both Hinch and Luhnow.

Virus impacts opening round of AFC's Asian Champions League

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—The coronavirus will have an impact on the opening week of the Asian Champions League despite the absence of Chinese clubs.

The champions from South Korea and Japan meet in the opening round on Tuesday, when extra precautions will mean that any fans wanting to watch Jeonbuk Motors against Yokohama F. Marinos will have to wear masks and have a temperature of under 37.5 Celsius to enter the Jeonju stadium.

Mainland China on Monday reported another rise in cases of the new virus, while the number of deaths grew by 97 to 908, with at least two more outside the country.

The Asian Football Confederation announced after an emergency meeting last week that because of the spread of the virus, the first three games for three Chinese clubs—Shanghai SIPG, Guangzhou Evergrande and Shanghai Shenhua—will be postponed.

“We came together in difficult circumstances to find solutions to allow us to play football while ensuring we protect the safety and security of all players, officials, stakeholders and fans,” AFC General Secretary Windsor John said. “We also accept that this coronavirus is a much bigger issue than just football and we wish all those who have been affected a speedy return to health.”

The AFC hope that the group stage in the eastern half of the tournament can be completed before the region starts its knockout stage in June.

Asia's biggest club competition involves 32 teams, divided into eight groups of four based in two geographical zones: east and west.

There are off-the-field is-



Members of Japan Self Defense Forces walk into the quarantined cruise ship Diamond Princess in the Yokohama Port Sunday, Feb. 9, 2020, in Yokohama, Japan. AP

sues in the west side of the draw, too. The four Iranian clubs will play their first three games away from home because of security concerns related to heightened tensions in the region. The clubs considered boycotting the tournament until a meeting last month with the AFC.

And so Shahr Khodro FC was traveling to Dubai to take on Saudi giant Al Hilal, which won the 2019 title in only the second West Asian triumph in the tournament since 2005.

In the eastern half, it remains to be seen if the Chinese contingent can return to action in late April and May to play their rescheduled fixtures but in the meantime, rivals will be looking to get some points on the board.

The J-League champions Marinos are back in the continental competition for the first time in six seasons.

“It’s a different game, a different proposition, a different opponent and a different coun-

try,” Marinos coach Ange Postecoglou said of the match against Jeonbuk. “We haven’t been in the AFC Champions League as a club for a long time so it’s going to be a good challenge for us.”

Yokohama lost the Japan Super Cup to Anders Iniesta’s Vissel Kobe in a penalty shoot out last weekend after a 3-3 draw at Saitama.

Vissel Kobe will be making a first Asian appearance and host Johor Darul Tazim of

Malaysia in one of only four games to go ahead in East Asia this week.

“We worked hard to get into the Champions League,” Iniesta, who won the 2010 World Cup with Spain, said. “We know that it won’t be easy but we are looking forward to the challenge of facing some of the best teams in Asia.”

Australia has three clubs in the group stage of the tournament for the first time, and Melbourne Victory and Sydney FC will be looking to

improve on the 2019 edition when they failed to win a single game.

“We have a big couple of months ahead in both the A-League and Champions League, and it will take our entire squad working hard together to help us achieve our ambition of qualifying for the next stage,” Melbourne coach Carlos Salvachua said.

Victory kick off against Thailand champion Changrai United, which is making its first appearance in the group stage.

CARSON, Calif. (AP)—Lynn Williams and the rest of the U.S. women sensed it was just a matter of time before they wore down Canada.

Williams broke open a scoreless stalemate with a goal in the 61st minute and the United States beat Canada 3-0 on Sunday in the title match of the CONCACAF Women’s Olympic qualifying tournament.

“We have a great front line, we have a great midfield. The defenders were doing their job in the first half, so now it was our turn to get the job done in the second half,” Williams said.

Lindsey Horan and Megan Rapinoe also scored for the United States, which extended its undefeated streak to 28 games. The U.S. did not concede a goal in five qualifying matches, and scored 25 times.

The U.S. and Canada had both already secured the region’s two spots in the Tokyo

US women beat Canada 3-0 in Olympic qualifying final

Games with victories in the semifinals. The United States, ranked No. 1 in the world, beat Mexico 4-0 in one semifinal and eighth-ranked Canada edged Costa Rica in the other game on Friday.

The U.S. has been to every Olympics since women’s soccer was included in 1996, and has won four gold medals. But the Americans were knocked out in the quarterfinals by Sweden four years ago in Brazil, the team’s earliest Olympic exit.

Canada has made the field in the past three Olympics, winning the bronze medal in the last two.

It was the fourth time the teams have met in the final of the region’s qualifying tournament, with the United States winning all four.

“In the first half, throughout the whole game, they were

very organized, very disciplined. They’re one of the best teams in the world, top 10 in the world, so it’s not going to be easy, if you sit back it will be really hard,” U.S. coach Vlatko Andonovski said. “I think in the first half we weren’t patient enough and not sharp enough. But I think in the second half we came out with a little bit more energy, we moved the ball a little faster, which ultimately resulted in a goal.”

Andonovski started Williams and Jessica McDonald, giving Tobin Heath the day off. Rapinoe came in as a substitute. Other veterans on the bench for the match included defenders Becky Sauerbrunn and Kelley O’Hara.

Julie Ertz wore the captain’s armband for her 99th appearance with the team. Christen

Press started and her streak of scoring in six straight games ended. Press was the fifth U.S. woman with a scoring streak at least that long, joining Mia Hamm, Michelle Akers, April Heinrichs and Carli Lloyd. It was the longest such streak for the U.S. since Lloyd scored in seven straight in 2014.

As expected, Canada coach Kenneth Heiner-Moller emphasized defense against his offensively proficient opponent, starting five defenders. The approach worked well throughout the first half.

And despite the defensive stand, Canada did have its opportunities. Jessie Fleming, a standout at UCLA, had an attempt that went over the goal and into the netting.

Press’ blast in the 32nd

minute hit the crossbar. A few moments later, she caught Canada goalkeeper Stephanie Labbe far out in front of her net, but the attempt from distance sailed over the goal.

Christine Sinclair’s attempt on a breakaway in the 38th minute was stopped by U.S. goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher.

Williams finally broke through Canada’s defense with a blast into the upper corner for a 1-0 lead. Horan doubled it 10 minutes later when she dribbled around two defenders and finished with a perfectly placed shot that Labbe couldn’t reach.

After her late goal, Rapinoe struck her victory pose with both arms raised toward the crowd, a move made famous last summer when the United States won the World Cup.

“I actually don’t think they did too much to adjust.



Cleanup of Oleai, Marpi pool facilities underway

By MARK RABAGO

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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

It has been a busy couple of weeks for the new leadership of the Northern Marianas Sports Association, as the group cleaned up and repaired the Oleai Sports Complex and Marpi pool.

NMSA president Jerry Tan said with the help of the Department of Public Works and Saipan Mayor's Office crew, they have managed to drain 80% of the water from the former Kan Pacific Swimming Pool.

"From Day 1 what has been bothering me a lot is the swimming pool. Our swimmers have been representing the CNMI well over the years and yet they have to train at the Pacific Islands Club or in the ocean," he said during last Thursday's NMSA membership meeting at the conference room of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Alex Sablan, one of Tan's special assistants to the NMSA board along with Merlie Tolentino, said the draining of the Marpi pool is being hindered by algae blooms.

"There are a lot of blooms now so the pumps were affected so at this point we had to go in and use the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s vacuum trucks and suck all those stuff out. After that we could go in with water blasters," he said, adding that to his estimate 150,000 gallons remain from the 600,000-gallon capacity Marpi pool.



MARK RABAGO

Northern Marianas Sports Association president Jerry Tan uses a slide show to show the repairs they've done at the Oleai Sports Complex and Marpi pool during last Thursday's NMSA general membership meeting.

Tan also said with assistance from the Tan Siu Lin Foundation, they were able to spruce up the conference room of the Ada Gym, which functions as the official home of NMSA.

"The day of our board meeting, which was a Thursday, when I walked in it was not acceptable. So, we got to work right away. The ceiling, the wall, and we put the proper

NMSA logo on the wall."

He added that NMSA also began cleaning up the Ada Gym's restrooms Wednesday last week and said clean and functioning restroom facilities should always be available in the islands' sports venues.

"I personally, I feel like we should always take care of our

restrooms. People need to use restrooms and they need to be clean."

Tan also reported that lighting at the Oleai track and field is back and this has been a boon to both rugby players and joggers at night.

"People can now jog until 7:30pm or 8pm and we can turn

it on longer if people want to."

Tan said after the Oleai Sports Complex and Marpi pool, NMSA will train its sights on other sports facilities in the islands.

"My priority is actually the sports facilities because of the previous typhoon and because of the lack of funding. I'd like to get a chance to take a look at all the sports facilities on island. I want to see where you play, where you train, and see

how we can support."

He said NMSA intends to keep the effort going and take every opportunity to fix the islands' sports facilities.

"Right now, it's Oleai [Sports Complex] and the Marpi swimming pool. These are just baby steps we're taking but definitely we want to provide the right environment for our athletes and hopefully bring the swimmers back into the pool."

IT&E

From Page 28

player of the game with his 20 points, while Tenorio, who went down momentarily in the third quarter with an apparent leg injury, paced IT&E with 23 markers. Ashburn was brilliant all game long and led all scorers with 24 points, while Villarin added 14.

In the first game, JNS leaned on Jeff Jarap's explosive start to raise its record to 6-3 in the masters division after routing Pacific Marine, 111-83.

JNS had a jackrabbit start and more than tripled Pacific Marine's first quarter output, 31-10, thanks to Jarap's 11 early points. Pacific Marine managed to trim their daunting deficit in the second, but still stared at a 15-point disadvantage heading into the third canto.

With the trio of Alex Ocampo, Tim Wesley, and Randy Mungcal running circles on their Pacific Marine defenders in the third quarter, JNS again went into full scoring mode and increased their lead to 81-53 heading into the playoff period.

Teng Alegre and Mungcal



MARK RABAGO

IT&E Dexter Tenorio soars for a layup in their masters division game against Sailmar Pilot last Saturday in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

then nailed the final nails on Pacific Marine's coffin in the fourth, firing a combined 20 points to help JNS cruise to the 28-point win. Jarap was named best player of the game with 19 points, while Alegre led them with 24 markers. Donnel Isip bombed away from the 3-point area to lead the now 1-7 Pacific Marine

with 17 markers.

First Game

JNS 111 – Alegre 24, Japar 19, Mungcal 18, Wesley 18, Tabora 12, Ocampo 9, Tobias 8, Garcia 6, Berosa 2.

Pacific Marine 83 – Isip 17, Flores 17, Guilas 15, Manangan 12, Sevilla 8, Surima 6.

Scoring by quarters: 31-

10, 53-38, 81-53, 111-83.

Third Game

IT&E 84 – Tenorio 23, Joyner 20, Lerio 14, Viola 12, Zapata 7, G. Masga 6.

Sailmar Pilot 74 – Ashburn 24, Villarin 14, Echavez 8, Raho 7, Tolentino 6, Guinto 6, Dela Cruz 2.

Scoring by quarters: 21-26, 36-43, 63-58, 84-74.

TOP

From Page 28

Hoo Wang advanced to the third round following a 6-1, 6-0 win over Irin Chung and Jinhui Jeong, while the seventh seeded pair of Isaac Heo and Seiyul Hong also advanced following a 6-4, 6-4 conquest of David Ki Won and Serin Chung.

Jun Wang and Yebin Shin scored a 6-2, 6-0 win over Derrick and Eliza Culp to get into the third round. Also onto the next round are Nason Wessel and Ken Imaya after surviving Yutaka Kadokura and John Bradley, 6-3, 6-2.

Men's singles top seed Robbie Schorr also moved ahead with his partner, Eun Been Hwang, after the duo completed a 6-0, 6-2 win over Cody Shimizu and Eun Been Hwang. Landon Pudney and Gary Ramsey were also a 6-0, 6-4 victors over Anna Lee and Daniel Kang.

In the lower half of the draw, after getting a bye in the first round, No. 8 seed Sam Culp and Juncheol Hwang advanced to the third round with a tough 6-1, 3-6, 11-9 win over Allan

Lee and Jieun Anna Kwon. Lee and Kwon beat Eliza Culp and Peter Loken, 4-6, 6-2, 10-6 in the first round.

No. 2 seeds Jimin Woo and Seo Hee Lee also got into the third round after bouncing Danny Jeoung and Sarka Jambor, 6-3, 6-0. Jeoung and Jambor won via walkover in their first round match against Yuko Kamada and Ji Houn Lee.

Third seeds Wataru Kadokura and Brian Wessel didn't have to break into a sweat in their walkover win against Eugene Park and Jeong Bin Park, while Vincent Tudela and Isa Nishitani joined them in the third round with a marathon 7-5, 6-7 (5), 10-3 win over Leo and Andy Kim.

Results of the 2020 White-Coconut Classic boys U16, U14, and U12 divisions will be published in the next few days.

The Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association is organizing the 2020 White-Coconut Classic. For more information on the 2020 White-Coconut Classic, call tournament coordinator Jeff Race at 483-5652 or email raceaces@yahoo.com.

Morant posts
1st triple-
double as
Grizzlies drop
Wizards
PAGE 24



Saipan Tribune Sports



Source: Dodgers,
Twins, Sox divvy
Betts deal
into 2 swaps

PAGE 25

28 TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2020

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

IT&E disconnects Sailmar Pilot



By MARK RABAGO
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Jawn Joyner scored all of his 20 points in the second half to lead IT&E to an 84-74 spanking of Sailmar Pilot in their masters division game in the United Filipino Organization IT&E 2019 Basketball League last Saturday at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Joyner didn't only made his damage scoring in the second half, but also swatted several Sailmar Pilot layups. Those he didn't block, he altered as Sailmar Pilot players botched several point-blank attempts in the fourth quarter with the 6' slotman manning the middle for IT&E.

Sailmar Pilot actually took the initiative from the get-go. With Andrew Ashburn having his way inside with 9 early points, Sailmar Pilot led 26-21 after the first quarter.

It was more of the same in the second quarter, as Ashburn combined with swingman Melvin Villarin and Sailmar Pilot upped its lead to 7 points, 43-36, at the halfway point of the match.

That was about to change at the start of the third quarter,

however. Cheered on by small but loud contingent of fans, IT&E began to assert itself and with Joyner pumping in 13 points backstopped by 6 from Dexter Tenorio, they grabbed the driver's seat and never looked back, leading 63-58, going into the final 10 minutes of the contest.

Sailmar Pilot tried mightily to stage a comeback in the fourth, but it could only narrow IT&E's lead down to 4 points, 65-69, on a 6-foot jumper by Tony Raho with 5:16 left in the game.

IT&E closed out Sailmar Pilot with a 15-9 run to seal the deal and catch their opponents in the team standings with a win-loss record of 5-3.

Joyner was named best

See IT&E on Page 27

Sumo wrestling comes to Hyatt

In support of its upcoming 40th anniversary in the CNMI, Hyatt Regency Saipan is proud to present an exclusive sumo wrestling experience with Saipan students.

On Saturday, Feb. 15, at 12pm Hyatt Regency will turn the beach side area into a *dohyu* like it did in 2015's sumo wrestler visit and introduce this year's visiting sumo wrestlers and the ancient art of sumo wrestling with select CNMI Public School System students.

Sponsored and guided by the president of Saipan Portopia Hotel Corp. and owner of Hyatt Regency Saipan, Hitoshi Nakauchi is very proud to share with 200 PSS students and a parent the sport of sumo wrestling, Japan's traditional sport.

"It is difficult to organize and sponsor any private sumo wrestler appearances, and have them travel outside of Japan," said Hyatt Regency Saipan general manager Nick Nishikawa. "And we are very lucky and honored to have the hotel owner bring this event to Saipan."

Alongside the fun event of meeting the visiting sumo wrestlers, Hyatt Regency Saipan will be serving *chanko nabe*, the staple food of sumo wrestlers for lunch. It is a hot pot dish that comes in many varieties and contains vegetables, seafood, and meat.

There are only 200 spaces available. These have been provided to the CNMI Public School System who will distribute to selected students. For more information, call +1 670 234 1234 ext. 26. (PR)

Top seeds prevail in mixed-up doubles

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A parade of top seeds advanced in the mixed-up doubles division of last weekend's 2020 White-Coconut Classic at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Fourth seeds Takeru Kim and Kim Song are safely into the quarterfinals after winning their second and third round assignments. They first were a 6-2, 6-4 winners over Henry Choi and Colin Ramsey last Saturday before returning to the AMP tennis courts on Sunday for their match against Martin Jambor and Lina Tsukagoshi and triumphed, 6-3, 6-3.

Also into the fourth round are third seeded June Yu and Ji

Hwan Ryu. They first beat Jihun Park and Helen Kim, 6-1, 6-1, in the first round before winning via walkover against

Simon Tang and T.J. Bellama. The latter were coming off a dramatic 7-6, 6-7, 10-6 victory against Quido Jambor and

Elizabeth Culp.

Top seeds Jeff Race and

See TOP on Page 27



MARK RABAGO
Sam Culp and Juncheol Hwang in action in last weekend's 2020 White-Coconut Classic at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.